

X
A 4.
SOBER REPLY
TO
M^r Robert Steed's
EPISTLE
Concerning SINGING.

WHEREIN

All his Objections against that Way
he calls the *Common and Popular Way*
of *Singing Psalms*, &c. are Imparti-
ally Examined, and in the Spirit of
Meekness, fully Answered.

Recommended to the consideration of all the
Saints and Churches of Christ, by divers Elders and
Ministers of *Baptized Congregations*.

Who desire their Brethren who are against such Sing-
ing, without prejudice to read these Lines, and con-
sider them.

LONDON,
Printed in the Year, 1691.



Handwritten notes:
works
Ben. Keen
4248



To all the Saints and Churches of
Christ, who are not Convinced
that 'tis their Duty to Sing the
Praises of God.

Beloved Brethren,

IT is matter of great Grief and Trou-
ble to us, to see any of our People,
much more so many, lying short
(for want of Light) of this great
Christian Duty of *Singing Psalms, Hymns,
and spiritual Songs*; which, as the Church-
es are enjoined in the New Testament to
do, so we find it was always practised by
the Lords People generally in their pub-
lick Assemblies, in Gods Worship, both in
Time of the *Law* and *Gospel*: But more
especially to find some amongst us so re-
solute in Opposing of it, and others to
make Divisions upon the Practice there-
of, and yet find so little Argument against
it. Mr. Steed (as it seems to us) hath not
so fairly stated the Question as he should,
which ought to have been this: *Viz. Whether
Singing the Praises of God by the whole Church*

†

in

To all the Saints, &c.

in their publick Assemblies, be a Gospel Duty, or not? However, we have read and considered this ensuing Answer to his Epistle, and finding it so fully and soberly done, think it necessary to recommend it to all your Considerations, hoping it may tend to enlighten many of your Souls who as yet have doubts about it, which that it may, we shall commit it to the Blessing of the great God, and remain

Tours in the Work

of the Gospel,

397
256
135
79
Joseph Masters,
William Collins,
Richard Adams,
James Jones,
Hercules Collins,
J. Warner,
Richard Mariot,
Abednego Smith,

415
33
237
Leonard Harrison,
Benjamin Dennis,
Joseph Wright,
Benjamin Keach,
Jo. Hammond,
William Groome,
R. Allen,
Samuel Bagwell,
John Christopher.

To

*****T*****

To the *Elders, Ministers and Members*
of the *Baptized Churches*, through-
out *England and Wales*.

Beloved in our Lord,

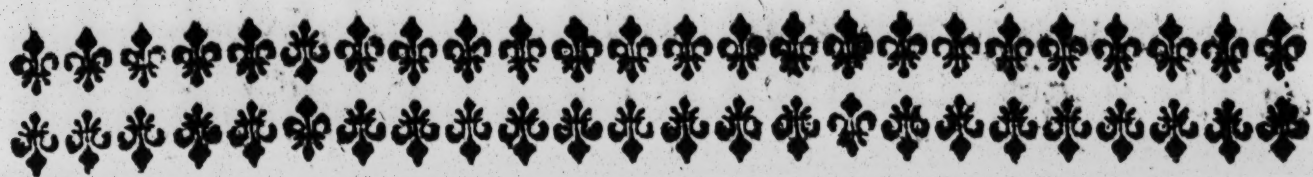
That common Proverb used amongst us, viz.
That Custom is a second Nature, we find
true in things Natural and Religious: Old
Customs, tho never so bad, are hardly left,
Jer. 13. 23. and long neglected Duties we come up
slowly to. And that which makes Reformation in any
thing the more difficult, is that Opposition it usually
meets with, many times, from those, whose Duty and
Office doth in a special manner Oblige them to restore
every Trdth of God that's fallen in our Streets. And
such hath been our case, (tho much to be lamented)
that when it pleased God to open the Eyes of many
amongst us into that holy Ordinance of Singing his
Praise both in Private and Publick, and from the clear
Evidence of his Word, made us sensible that this part
of Divine Worship, so frequently commanded and com-
mended in Holy Writt, both to Jews and Gentiles, is
as Ancient as the World, and will continue when Time
shall be swallowed up in Eternity. We had then no
Mind to have published our thoughts to the World, nor
to have troubled the Churches with any Dissertations
about it. But endeavoured to have a Friendly Debate
with our Brethren, who were conven'd to consult the
Churches Welfare: But our Endeavours thereto being ob-
structed by the Opposers of this Truth; Soon after some
of them, from an imprudent Zeal to maintain their own
mistaken Sentiments, openly opposed this holy Truth of
God, and took unto themselves a kind of lawless Liber-
ty, not only to calumniate those who endeavoured the
restoration of this Ordinance, but also to Reproach the
Truth

To the Elders, Ministers, &c.

Truth of God in this particular, by calling it Will-Worship, Formal, Carnal, Invented, &c. which put us upon a necessity (unless we would betray the Truth of Christ by a sinful silence) to discover their great Mistakes and unaccountable Absurdities and Prevarications herein, to all that desire to wait upon God in the way of Holiness, and to remove the Stumbling-blocks that busie men have endeavoured to trouble those Churches with, who desire to live in peace. This hath occasioned the publishing of this little Treatise now in thine hand, which is hereby recommended to thy diligent and candid perusal; and whoever thou mayest be that readest, I have onely these few things to desire of thee: Make the Word of GOD thy Rule in Judging, lay by all Prejudice, weigh what thou findest in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, and do not judge before thou hast read what is said for this holy Ordinance. And remember, that every Truth of God, hath some Adversaries, and if thou wilt not receive Truth, untill its Adversaries have nothing to say, thou must receive no Truth at all, untill the Devil is bound, and all the Nations of the World undeceived. Wait at the Throne of Grace, in a humble Spirit, for Light in this particular; if thou art yet in the Dark concerning this holy Institution. And whether thou dost own and practise this Ordinance or not, see that thou put on Charity towards those that are otherwise minded; and if you cannot all agree, to sing the Praises of God together here on Earth, I am sure all the Children of God will harmonize in this Work in Heaven. Now that the Lord might bless this little Treatise to thy Establishment in the Truth of Singing Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, to his own Glory, and thy Souls and others Comfort and Edification, is the Desire, and shall be the Prayer of thine in the Lord,

Thomas Whinnel.

A



A Sober Reply to Mr. Robert Steed's Epistle.

SIR,

HA D you wrote private Letters to your own people about your sentiments concerning singing the praises of God, to obstruct the restoration of that blessed Gospel Ordinance, and not have published it to the World, we might have seen no such Cause (as now we do) to answer your Epistle.

When we heard you were a writing, we expected it would have contained an answer to what hath lately been published in vindication thereof by Reverend Mr. Knowles, Mr. Keach, Dr. Wright, Mr. Whinnel, &c. but we now see no such thing attempted, but contrarywise only a heap of words, being little else than the substance of what Mr. Marlow hath troubled the World and Churches with. And it seems as if the Sermon you formerly preached against this Holy Truth of Christ, was the muddy Fountain from whence his lines proceeded; and that it was you those worthy Persons in the dark contended with, which was hinted to some of us some time since.

But truly Sir, this way of yours seems new as well as strange: Hath any controversible Truth met with such usage? you at once give up the cause provided those weighty Treatises, so full of Scripture Arguments are not answer'd; for all men may see all that you have said, fully answered before your Epistle was printed: But you, 'tis like, foresaw some

great Advantage by your Essay, in that you find some of your People so hardened, and prejudiced against Singing the Praises of God, that they will not be at the charge to buy those Books, nor trouble themselves to read them, and you giving yours away, we see we must do the like, if we would leave them without excuse here, and in the great Day.

There is one thing that we cannot pass by without Lamentation, *viz.* in that you were not satisfied to preach down in your Congregation what your Reverend Brother Mr. Knowles, your Fellow Elder, who is (as we may say) the Father of the Church, had preached up, but now writ against him also; One would have thought Modesty, and Respect to his great Age, Learning, and Sincerity, and to prevent reproach, might have stopped your Pen, and unadvised attempt: Is it not sad to see that one Elder in such a Cause and Spirit, should appear in print against another? Are these things lovely, or of good report? could you have found no other way to have put an end to the controversie amongst your own People, since you pretend only to be concerned for the Members of your own Congregation? There are some who also have too much countenanced Divisions in Churches upon the account of Singing the praises of God, we shall be glad if you can clear your self in that matter: And the more inexcuseable they seem to be, since to their Knowledge the Assembly of the Elders, Ministers and Messengers of our Churches declared their utter dislike of any Breach or Division in the Churches upon the account of the practice or non-practice of Singing of Psalms, as 'tis now, and hath in every Age been performed; and also gave Advice to the contrary: Moreover, your Epistle is dispersed abroad, and many of them given away in divers Churches in the City, and amongst others in the Countrey.

But

But to proceed, tho' your Epistle hath nothing contained in it but what hath been effectually answered, yet we think it not convenient to let any thing come out, designed to obstruct or hinder the practice of this great and Sacred Duty without an Answer; we shall therefore examine each part and paragrapp thereof, and give you a Sober Reply, that so all stumbling-blocks may be removed out of the way of Gods People, and those Churches cleared from the charge of humane Innovations, &c. who are in the practice of it.

First of all, For your great care for the Souls of your People no Body can blame you: But in *Page 1.* to suggest that Satan may beguile them by their adhering to this Ordinance of Singing Psalms in Gods publick Worship, shews you are of a bitter Spirit, and very censorious. It was not Satan but Jesus Christ, in your Reverend Brother, who strove to promote that Truth of his in his own, and other Churches of the Saints; had you mentioned any other thing you call an Error, which your Members, &c. were in danger to be beguiled with: This should have been pass'd by. But to put us out of doubt what your meaning is, you in *page 3.* seem to bewail those dear Churches Satan hath hereby beguiled already.

2. In the second place we will come to consider of the great Question which you say is raised among the Baptized Churches, &c. 'Which is (say you) whether the common way of Singing by a set and stinted Form, with a whole Congregation every one together, without exception, lifting up their Voices, be an Ordinance of our Lord Jesus, or whether it ought not to be exploded as an invention of Men; being of the same quality, if not worse than common stinted set Forms of Prayer. Tho' you state not the question fairly, yet we

Reply. We are glad the proper question is raised among the Baptized Churches, and the practice of it too in near thirty of them, divers others also having to the praise of God, and Joy of our Souls, lately receiv'd it, and have got, and are endeavouring to get into the practice thereof. Nor will the hard Names you give it hinder the general reception of it, unless you had any hard Arguments to bring against it, which we see you have not found as yet, and we are sure never will, for 'tis in vain to strive against the stream of Sacred Truth of singing the praises of God too.

Common way of Singing, &c. 'Tis a good word if well intended: We read of *common Salvation, common Faith, &c.* Our way of Preaching is never the worse because 'tis the common way that other Churches have among them, and is used by other Ministers, nor no more is our way of Singing. 2. It may be called *common* because used before the Law, under the Law, and under the Gospel Dispensation, in the Churches of Christ in the purest Times. 3. Let it also go for the common way of Singing, as that which is owned and vvitnesed to by Gods Word, and his faithful People in opposition to some unknowvn, unheard of and secret vway vvhich you suggest, vvhich no body understands: for singing of Psalms, 'You say, is an Ordinance, it may be, nay, should be practised in a Gospel Church, page 4. But howv it ought to be done, no Body can understand by your Epistle, the way you hint at is hidden; some mode or manner it is you would have, but 'tis a secret not yet revealed; 'tis a hard case you should suggest, that a Gospel Ordinance, enjoyned on the Churches, should lie so dark and obscure in Christs New Testament, that no Body should be able to understand what the matter is which should be sung, nor who the Persons are that should sing, and yet the Holy Ghost calls them Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, [*a set stinted Form.*]

Reply.

Reply. A set stinted Form, we affirm positively in the fear of God, is laid down both in *Col.* 3. 16. and *Eph.* 5. 19. A Psalm cannot be a Psalm, nor a Hymn an Hymn, nor a Spiritual Song a Song, without a set stinted Form, it can't be without so many distinct set or stinted words, Syllables and Lines.

You may as well say a Chapter is not a set stinted Form, as once to suggest the Scripture-Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, which the Holy Ghost enjoyns the Churches to sing, are not set and stinted Forms; or to suppose because set and stinted Forms, they are to be exploded as an invention of men: Pray Brother how came Scripture, Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, which in the Original are in Metre, to be the Inventions of carnal men? Had carnal men a hand in compiling the Sacred Bible, and enjoyning Gospel Precepts? and how came a set stinted Form of Psalms, Hymns, &c. contained, and plainly laid down in Gods Word, to be as bad or worse than a set and stinted Form of humane composed and imposed Prayers; when humane inventions are as good as Divine and Sacred Institutions, we will be of your mind, and then we will say you spoke Truth, but not till then can we believe you, nor regard what you say on this account. If there had been no Scripture, Psalms, &c. in being, nor known to the Churches, when the Holy Ghost enjoined them to sing Psalms: Or if the ordinary Gifts of the Spirit might not serve and enable us as well to put a Psalm or Hymn in order to be sung, as a Doctrine in order to be preached: Then you might say the Church was to wait for some extraordinary effusion of the Spirit, or some miraculous Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, before they could perform that Duty; nor could that Duty be performed longer than such gifts abode in the Church: And if so, you had said something, but now we see you have said nothing that has weight in it: but more of this anon. You say, *With a whole Congregation,*

every one together without exception, lifting up their Voices together, [that is in singing.]

Reply. Must this way of Singing be exploded as an invention of men, God forbid, for then Moses and the whole Congregation were guilty of an invention of men, and Deborah, and Barak, David, and all Israel, and which is worse, Christ and his Apostles, Paul and Silas; nay, and an invention of men is enjoined on the Church; for they all are enjoined thus to be Sung together, every one of them, not one excepted, take two or three Arguments further to make it appear, the Churches were thus required to sing.

1. That way Christ and his Disciples sung, the Churches were to sing, because Christ and his Disciples set the direct Pattern: But Christ and his Disciples sung all together, as is fully proved in the late Treatises. Ergo.

2. If the Churches are enjoined to sing, and not one Member is exempted or excepted, then they are all to sing, and to sing together according to the Pattern given by Christ and his Disciples; but the Churches are enjoined to sing, and not one Member exempted or excepted: Ergo, They all are to sing, and to sing together according to the Pattern given by Christ and his Disciples, Mat. 26:30. Mark 14. 26.

3. If singing Gods Praises were under the Law with Voices lift up together, and the Saints are in the New Testament required to sing, and no other way is prescribed or laid down how they should sing.

Then the Saints in the New Testament ought to sing as they sang under the old.

But such was the Singing of Gods People under the Law, and the Churches are enjoined to sing Psalms in the New Testament, and no other way prescribed or laid down how they should sing, Ergo.

The Churches are now to sing in the times of the Gospel, as Gods People under the Law.

But you say the former, that is, Singing with Voi-

ces

ces together, was unanimously concluded by the most part, if not all the Baptized Churches, to be Will-worship.

1. Reply. Suppose it was so concluded to be by them then, might they not be mistaken? Had they attained to a perfection of Knowledge in the whole Will of God? or were those Churches appointed by the Lord to be our Pattern further than they followed Christ and the Primitive Church?

2. We ask you whether or no generally the same Baptized Churches in those times did not as unanimously conclude and declare it too, that for a Gospel Minister to have a Yearly Allowance, or a competent Maintenance, was an humane Invention and Antichristian? We speak in part upon our own Knowledge, and by good Information we have had from others, that both those Gospel Duties and Ordinances were equally decryed, and we suppose you are not ignorant of it; nay, and we hear some Churches, or members of those Churches are of the same Opinion still. How now Dear Brother, are you for building what was destroyed; if not, we are no more guilty in the one than you are in the other, and to our grief, since it was so concluded then, we find it comes to be so hard a thing to bring our Churches to embrace the one or the other as they ought.

3. What if through a hot, and an unaccountable Zeal, our Churches in the beginning of the last Reformation did throw away some pure Gold with much Antichristian dross, ought they not, now God hath graciously been pleased to open their Eyes, to labour to recover the Gold again, we mean both those great Gospel Duties, viz. Singing of Scripture Psalms, and the Ministers maintenance. Honoured Brother, *The path of the Just is as a shining light, that shines more and more to the perfect day, Prov. 4. 18.* God doth not discover all his whole Mind and Will to his people at once, but some at one time, and some at another.

And blessed be God, there are some risen up, of whom Mr. Steed is one, who affirms, That the Ministers

nisters of the Gospel ought to have a competent maintenance, so that they may comfortably live of it, and some others are risen up, who do not only affirm that, but also that the Churches ought to sing the praises of God, and prove it too by undeniable Arguments, and in that common way that was used by the Church of *Israel* under the Law, and by the Lord Jesus, and his Church and Churches under the Times of the Gospel.

And as it is now commonly used in most Churches of Christ in our days, *viz.* with Voices lifted up together, and hereby we do build what was wanting, and restore an Ordinance too long neglected by some of the Churches of Christ.

Others condemn our way of preaching, and call it a common Artificial acquired attainment, as you condemn and call our Singing: But how dare you so rashly affirm, or intimate, That this way of Singing is brought into some Churches by the guile and policy of Satan, and compare it with Common Prayer? have you an intallible Spirit? Men may in some cases be bold in their assertions, when they speak of some Truths that the whole Body of the Godly are established in: But thus to speak against an Ordinance, which almost all the Faithful people of God, and Churches now and in every Age, have received as an undoubted Truth of Christ, is hard.

Especially considering how weak your Arguments seem to be, or how little you have to say against it. Sir, this way of singing of Scripture Psalms, is as certainly an Ordinance of Christ, as Preaching, Prayer &c. are such, and so it will appear one day, say you what you please, who affirm singing to be an Ordinance in the Church, and yet sing not properly at all in any manner of way, but wholly live in the neglect of this great Duty.

But you in Page 2. affirm, you are for singing: These are your words, *viz.* The outcry is, you are against singing in the Church, if Persons in Judgment and Conscience

science testifie against common singing, as that which ought not to be used in a Church of Christ, which, say you, is false, and as vile a Slander as the former, for they are for singing, that is, for praising of God, or teaching one another, or themselves in Psalms and Hymns, &c.

Reply. Brother, 'tis a hard case prejudice against an Ordinance should so blind your Eyes, that with all your Learning, you should not know what singing is, but conclude simple praising of God in Prayer, is singing: hath not Mr. Keach in the first Chapter of his Treatise clearly confuted this Conceit, to which you make no reply: Singing is a distinct act of the Voice, and 'tis known to all mankind how it differs from any other acts of the bodily Organs, as Mr. Gosnal once told Mr. Kiffin in a discourse they had about it.

We say and testifie you sing not, and do appeal to all men in the World, whether praising God in Prayer is singing; tho' you do praise God, yet we say you do not sing his Praise, which the Churches are enjoined to do. Are you willing to joyn issue in this one single point in a sober Dispute? If you can prove you sing in any proper sense, (for 'tis not an improper or metaphorical singing which the Holy Ghost enjoins on the Churches) we will give up the Cause to you. But if that be not singing you speak of, you must acknowledge 'tis true, what you are charged with, viz. That you are against singing in the Church, and so wholly neglect it, through ignorance of what it is: And it cannot be a false Calumny or Accusation that you are charged with, which you intimate "Page 2. whilst you decry that way of singing which you call common, sith you are in the practice of no singing at all, neither of the whole Church, nor of one single person.

2. Can any wise man be so ignorant as to conclude those Precepts, Eph. 5. 19. Col. 3. 16. do mean a bare exhorting one another out of the Book of Psalms, and not such an admonishing one another in Psalms, Hymns and spiritual Songs, that is in singing of them?

That

That we are exhorted to sing Psalms, &c. no man who has not lost his senses can deny; and if that singing was no more than *praising* God in Prayer, then it would follow, in Prayer we *exhort* one another, and *speake* one to another; and how absurd it is to affirm, that, we will leave to all mens consideration.

Dear Brother, we have a great respect for you, and doubt not but God hath endowed you with good abilities to preach his Word; but this Exposition of yours, of *admonishing one another in Psalms, &c. singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord*, must be wholly exploded as a great Error.

2. To proceed, if Gospel singing were nothing else than praising of God in Prayer, &c. why do you speak of *waiting* for such Gifts from the Holy Spirit, as may put you into a Capacity to perform it fully according to the primitive Platform and Pattern? These words betray you, and may sufficiently inform every mans judgment who shall read your Epistle, that you are conscious to your self of the present want of the practice of this great Gospel Duty which you say *may*, nay *should* be in a Church of Christ.

For if you sing when you praise God, and that answers the Mind of God in those Gospel Precepts, *Eph. 5. 19. Col. 3. 16.* what need you wait for such gifts to put you into a capacity to perform it fully, according to the Primitive Platform and Pattern? it appears that solemn giving of thanks or praising of God in Prayer, is not singing according to the primitive Platform in your Conscience and Confession: (certainly, to do duty, and not according to the Gospel Pattern, is sinfull;) but that the primitive way or manner of singing you are waiting for; in which it seems you are turned Seeker: we dread the Effects of your Notion, and that it may insnare many gracious and well-meaning Christians. May not they well say, Since we have not those special Gifts to perform one Ordinance, and that we ought not to practise it untill we have such Gifts which were in the Primitive

Primitive Church, we must perform or practise none untill those extraordinary Gifts do return, (which there is no ground to believe ever will :) This is what the *Seekers* assert, and was we of your mind in the case of Singing, we know we could not withstand the casting off all Ordinances, from such a Supposition you suggest.

How inconsistent to Gospel simplicity doth what you affirm seem to be, let all men judge : One while you are for Singing, and intimate you are in the practice of it too ; and what singing is that ? Why, you tell us, *viz.* 'Tis *praising of God*, and if that be not Singing, then you are wholly without it.

But notwithstanding this Singing, you intimate you are waiting for such Gifts as may put you into a Capacity to perform it fully according to the primitive Platform and Pattern : So that it seems you do not sing as yet according to the primitive Platform and Pattern, and if so, your singing cannot be allowed, nor will it serve to discharge that Gospel Duty ; because every thing in Gods Worship that is accepted, ought to be done according to the primitive Pattern ; but if the one be Gospel Singing, there's no need of the other, and if the latter which you wait for Gifts to perform at present, be the true primitive way of Singing, certainly the other can be no singing at all : Because it differs quite in the Nature of it from that which you intimate you are waiting for Gifts to perform.

You call the *common way* an *Invention*, and render it as bad as offering strange Fire, but you do not prove 'tis so. You mention Reverend Mr. *Edward Harrison*, who you say was concerned ; that such sort of Singing was to be avoided as Will-worship : 'Tis strange if he lookt upon it with such an evil Eye, he did not leave a Testimony against it, as he did against *Laying on of Hands* upon Baptized Believers as such.

But what do you mention Mr. *Harrison* for, as one on your side ? May not we cite Reverend Mr. *Tomes*,

a man famous beyond most for the Baptized Way, who was for this Way of Singing; and so was the Learned and pious Mr. Gosnall, and the late pious, prudent, laborious, learned and faithful Mr. Jesse, and learned and godly *Vavasor Powel*, and so is the Reverend, Pious Learned and Laborious Mr. *Hans Knowls*, and some hundreds of able Divines perhaps not inferiour to any of them. Comparisons are not pleasing, but why may not one faithfull, pious and learned Minister be regarded, and his Steps and Sentiments followed, as well as another? All the Baptists were not against this way of Singing when first our Churches were planted.

But let some worthy men say what they please, and call it Will-worship, we matter it not, since we find this way of Singing was alwayes used both under the Old and New Testament: Tho Mr. *Harrison* and his Congregation would not sing together, yet Mr. *Harrison's* great Master Jesus Christ and his Congregation, did sing together, who is our Pattern, and not Mr. *Edward Harrison*, further than he followed Christ.

But why will you not enter into the List of this Controversie? pray be not unwilling to answer those Books lately published, or else dispute out this point soberly, in a sweet cool Gospel Spirit? If you can convince us we are in an Error, we shall retract it, and bless God for your care of our Souls, and Churches, which you affirm are carried away with an invention of men, from our Virgin simplicity: we shall now examine what you lay down in the fourth page of your Epistle, which it seems is the heads of a Sermon you preached against Singing, after Reverend Mr. *Knowles* had in the Morning preached it up as a Gospel Ordinnace: sad case!

First, "You say you shall shew what Singing is, that may or should be practis'd in a Gospel Church."

Secondly, "In what order or manner it ought to be managed according to Divine Appointment."

Thirdly, "How it appears that the Common Singing is not an Ordinance of Jesus Christ."

Fourthly,

Fourthly, "Shall confider you say, some Scriptures
"that are alledged for this common Singing in the
"New Testament.

Fifthly, "Shall mention something concerning your
"waiting on the Lord for the full reviving of it ac-
"cording to the primitive Pattern.

First then, (you say,) "As to what that Singing
"is that may or should be practised in a Gospel
"Church, I shall thus briefly, say you, describe it, viz.
"It is the solemn, joyful distinct expressing or found-
"ing forth the high praise of the great God, and his
"Son Jesus Christ, &c. according as the Holy Spi-
"rit giveth ability or utterance to an Elder, or gifted
"Brother, in a Church or Assembly of the Saints,
"which is to be brought forth from a right frame, and
"to be managed in an orderly manner, according to
"the direction given us in the Holy Scripture of the
"New Testament, which is the only Rule for the
"discovery of, and guiding us into the practice of
"Gospel Ordinances, whereunto it doth not appear,
"nor can it be proved that the common Artificial
Rhimes, Measures or Tunes are essential to it, I say
"they are not Essential to it, though not unlawful.

I. Reply. We must needs say your method is well
cut out, but ill made up.

For First, you leave us in the dark about what
you believe singing is, tho you say it is a distinct ex-
pressing or sounding forth the high praise of God,
&c. for you may yet mean as far as any Body can
see, hereby only praising of God in Prayer, unless
you had added, 'tis a solemn distinct expressing or
sounding forth the high Praises of God, by a *musical*
melodious modulation or tuning of the Voice, which only
distinguishes what singing is, from any other distinct
act of the bodily Organs, as 'tis always understood by
all Mankind: 'tis well however, you dare not say
Rhimes, Measures or Tunes are unlawful. We
will not say as well as you, Rhime is Essential to it;
but if it be a Psalm, Hymn or Song, and yet not
Metre

Metre, or measur'd feet, we and all Mankind are generally mistaken, for we know not how Prose differs from Metre any other ways; but if there may be a melodious modulation of the Voice, or a proper singing without Metre, we will not contend about that; and if you can sing that way, pray use your liberty; but since Rhime, measures and Tunes are not unlawful, (as you positively affirm they are not) you ought to leave us to our liberty, and not condemn that as an invention of men, or an Error, which we perceive you dare not do, because you know in the Original the Book of Psalms, part of Job, Hannah's and Deborah's Songs, Prov. Eccles. & Song of Solomon, the Song of Isaiah, the Lamentations and Habakkuk, &c. are in Metre.

2. But why may we not sing with measur'd feet? &c.

1. Your first reason is, Because you say there is no Rule in the New Testament enjoining them, nor any example for such a practice.

Answer. There is a Rule in the New Testament enjoining singing Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs: And from thence we thus reason, If the Church knows no other singing of Psalms, Hymns, &c. but such a way, viz. in Metre, as was used under the old Testament, then that way the Churches are to sing, but the former is true.

2. If Psalms, Hymns, or Songs differ only from Prose, because they are in Metre, and this too in the common understanding of all men, then the Psalm, Hymn, or Song is or must be in Metre, or measur'd feet, &c. that is sung, or else 'tis no Hymn or Song at all, but only in conceit and fancy.

“Whereas, as you ask, whether a person cannot be merry in the Lord, express his Joy in Praise and Thanksgiving with chearful Voice, without such an Artificial Composure before mentioned.

Answer. We do not deny but a person may be merry in the Lord, and express his Joy in Praise and Thanksgiving with a chearful Voice too, and yet not sing the Praises of God; what tho we that way do
and

and are to rejoyce, yet ought we not to leave the other undone; *viz.* to express our Joy when merry in the Lord by singing, because we are enjoined by the Lord to sing and make melody; will you teach and instruct the Almighty? What, says some, can't we Worship God without going into the water and be baptized, or remember Christs Death without breaking Bread, and drinking Wine. Take heed, dear Brother, singing the Praises of God is enjoined on us, and on the Churches of Christ, 'tis not left to our liberty, whether we will do it or not: And other praising of God with chearful voice must not exclude this way, nor can it without Sin in neglect of a holy Duty. And Brother, you have no more reason to call it an artificial composure, than so to call our composd Sermons. The Prophet had a very pleasant composd voice in Preaching, so have some now, but must they be charged with an artificial composure; who gave man that melodious tongue but God, and was it to any other design think you than to sing forth his praise?

Secondly, You say, *If those things (that is Metre, Verse and Tune) be essential, then this Singing would be more a Natural Art, or rather an Artificial acquired attainment than a Spiritual gift.*

Answ. We answer, Natural Art, and Natural Gifts are from God, as Speech, or to speak, is given to us by him: 'Tis moreover an Ordinance to read God's Word, and an absolute Duty, and yet it can't be attained without Art, and barely to read is more an Artificial acquired attainment than a Spiritual; so is it barely to sing, and to preach, pray, and hear too; but to read, to pray, to preach, and to sing Spiritually, can't be done without Spiritual gifts, for without Grace in the Heart, none of those Natural, Moral and Artificial acquired attainments can be performed acceptably to God.

Thirdly, you say, *Then the Melody would be as much in the Voice or Tune, as in the Heart, contrary to Eph. 5.*

B

Answ.

Ans. The Melody ought to be in the Heart according to *Eph. 5.* and in the Voice too, or else it could not be singing; 'tis not to be a melody without the Voice, but if it be only in the Voice, and no Spiritual Melody in the Heart, then 'tis, we grant, contrary to *Eph. 5.* Doth not your supposed way of singing with chearful Voice, consist as well in the Voice as in the Heart.

The Psalmist tells us, when God brought back the Captivity of *Sion*, He filled their mouths with laughter, and their Tongues with singing. Singing is only an act of the Tongue or Voice, and so acknowledged by all Mankind.

Lastly you say, 'There be such Speeches recorded in Scripture, which are and may be called Songs of praise, which we do not find were uttered with tune-able Singing, but with an audible solemn chearful Voice, as that which is called the Song of *Hannah*, &c. and the blessed Virgin.

Ans. Why do you assert any such things? if they praised God in a Song, they sung the praises of God; but they praised God in a Song, *Ergo*, they sung his praise; this must be granted, unless you can prove any did praise God in a Song without Singing.

2. If this be not so, the propriety of Speech, or acts of the bodily Organs are confounded, and we left in the dark, and the common Understanding of all Mankind deceived.

3. Tho' 'tis not said they sung those Songs, yet their Singing of them is directly implied, because they praised God and magnified him in Songs.

4. You know those Songs in the Original are in Metre: Were you not a Scholar, we should not so much admire at your mistake; it was no proper Song they praised God in, if it were not sung, and none dare say that those are metaphorically called Songs.

5. But you must conclude they were Tropical and Metaphorical Songs, or else believe they in a proper sense, according to the common Understanding of Mankind.

kind in general, did sing those Songs. To conclude with this Head, viz. What Singing is? all men may perceive your Trumpet gives in this matter an uncertain sound, for one while you intimate 'tis praising of God in Prayer, another while you suggest you wait for a special gift, to perform it according to the Primitive platform.

And after all, do not say 'tis a musical melodious modulation, or tuning of the Voice, tho' but of one single person alone, which is the distinction of that distinct act of the voice known to the common race of mankind.

So that when that Gift is attained you wait for, we know not what a sort of Singing we shall have: But the Word of God hath not left us thus in the dark about what it is to sing.

1. All Learned Men affirm 'tis an act of the voice, which all men know how it differs from any other act of the bodily Organs, as Prayer, common praises, rejoicing, preaching, crying, shouting, &c. as it also clearly appears from *Exod. 32. 17.*

2. That 'tis clearly distinguished from the Duty of Prayer, as another distinct act, by the Apostle Paul, *1 Cor. 14. 15. What is it then? I will pray with the Spirit, and will pray with the understanding also, I will sing with the Spirit, and will sing with the understanding also.* Common praise is by all confessed to be a part or branch of Prayer, and comprehended in prayer, and therefore that is not singing; the same we have laid down by the Apostle, *James 5. 13.*

3. In a word, 'tis we say again a musical melodious praising of God, which had you affirmed, you had not left your people in the dark about it, as now you have. But to proceed, we shall refer our Reader for his further satisfaction concerning this to Mr. Keach's Book, *Chap. 1. p. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.* 'Tis called the *making a joyful noise to the Lord*, *Psal. 81. 1.* and *Psal. 91. 1.* In *Rev. 19.* 'tis said those that shall sing those *Hallelujahs*, shall make a noise as of a

great Thunder, which can't be the voice of one single man.

Secondly, We shall come to examine that which in page 5. you call the order or manner of Singing, which you say we are plainly directed unto, by what is recorded in 1 Cor. 14. From 26th. Verse you say it is a gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed on whom and when he pleases, for the Edification of the Church, and that the Psalm was to be uttered or sung by him that had it singly.

Ans. That it was to be uttered or spoken forth by one singly, is granted, but that it was sung by him alone singly, we deny ; the reason you give for your bold assertion follows in the said fifth page of your Epistle.

1. For, or because they were so to prophesie, viz. one by one, the same direction being given you say, for expressing or singing of a Psalm, verse 31.

Ans. Brother, why did you not rehearse that 29, 30, 31 verses, for had you so done, all who read your Epistle might see what you say is not true, there is nothing expressed or spoken in verse 28, 29, 30, 31, about singing at all.

We will give the Reader the trouble to read the Verse which our Brother affirms this assertion from, and let it be considered. This Text had need to be plain for his purpose, because he cites no other place of Scripture for what he says, but this one only, to prove that one single person should sing in the Church alone ; *Let the Prophets speak two or three, and let the others judge, ver. 29. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace, ver. 30. For ye may all Prophesie one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted, ver. 31.*

These are the verses from whence Mr. Steed affirms the Apostle gives directions about singing one by one, as in the case of prophesying: But how greatly he is mistaken, will appear.

1. For

1. For 'tis plain from hence, that the Apostle speaks only of prophesying or preaching, and not of Singing: And evident it is, that but one single person at once ought to preach, prophecy, or interpret the Scripture, and this direction the Apostle gives about the exercise of those gifts, because the contrary is confusion all the World knows.

But 'tis not confusion for two, three, or three-score to sing together, for if it were, *Moses* and the whole Congregation, and Christ and his Disciples performed a confused piece of Worship, which is Blasphemy to assert.

2. You say it is positively asserted by the Holy Spirit, that to do otherwise is not *order* but *confusion*, which the All-wise God *is not the Author of*: ver.

33. From this Rule it is, say you, that our Prayers, our Doctrines and Exhortations are uttered singly in the Churches.

And that we do not admit of those responses or repetitions with audible voice of the multitude in Prayer, which are allowed of, and practised in some Protestant Assemblies, shall we admit of this Rule, to guide us in some Cases, and deny it in others? &c.

1. *Ans.* The Apostle condemns that practice, as being confusion, which seemed to be so by Unbelievers as well as Believers, and so by all men in general; and such a practice, which if the Church allowed it, if Unbelievers come into their Assemblies they would say, Are they not mad? And so indeed they might say, should they see several together at one time a preaching, prophesying, or interpreting the Scripture, or vocally praying together: But it was never look'd upon by *Jews* or Gentiles to be confusion for a great multitude to sing together, for so the Lords People, *viz.* *Israel* of old sung, and so sung the Heathen Nations to their Gods, therefore this of singing together could not be intended.

2. Can any Man be so blind to think there was

such a practice that was confusion in Gods Worship under the Law, for you will not deny but the Levites or the Priesthood then sung together in their courtes, in which was typified, some conclude, the whole Spiritual Priesthood under the Gospel, or the whole Church singing together with Grace in their Hearts unto the Lord.

3. Since the Scripture you bring doth not prove what you affirm, in the Judgment of all wise Men generally, but is only your ovvn Interpretation of it: And since no Scripture is of a private Interpretation, We Exhort you in Gods Fear to prove this your Exposition of it by some other place or places of the Holy Scripture, viz. Shew, where ever any one Man singly alone did ever sing, or was allowed so to do in Gods ordinary Worship, either in the Church of the Jews, or in the Gospel-Church; which if you cannot do, your Interpretation is utterly to be rejected. You know, Honoured Brother, this is the same Argument we use to Dect Men in other Cases, when they put their own private sense on any Text, which they cannot prove from any other place of sacred Scripture.

Fourthly, Your fourth Reason for one single Persons singing, is taken from *Ver. 34.* where the Apostle saith, *Let your Women keep silent in the Church, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are Commanded to be under Obedience, as also saith the Law.*

Ans. About this we argue thus, viz. Since in your Judgment the Apostle had excluded Men to sing together in the Church, and that they were not admitted to sing, but only one singly alone, the Women were much more, you may conclude, had that been his sense forbidden, and so no room left to subjoyn this Prohibition.

2. But the Context and Scope of the Text opens what the Apostle intends, he is a treating about Prophecyng or Teaching doctrinally in the Church, and gives liberty to all gifted Men so to do, provided they did

did it in order, *viz.* One by One : But least the Women should conclude who had the Gift of Prophecy or Teaching they might use that Gift, and take upon them to Teach or Exercise Authority over the Men, the Apostle layes down this Prohibition, they must not be permitted in a Ministerial way, to Preach or Teach in the Church in ordinary Administration, but be in Obedience or Subjection, as saith also the Law : So that it appears 'tis no other Prohibition on Women than what was under the Law, therefore extends not to prohibit them from singing, for they were suffered so to do then ; *Miriam* and *Deborah* sung in the Congregation, and 'tis left to their Praise and Commendation ; so that from what you say in the last place, p. 6. as to this, *viz.* that all this is delivered with solemn awful Charge, &c. signifies nothing to confute singing of a multitude together, though Preaching, Prophecy, or Interpreting the Scriptures together in a disorderly and confused manner, is here forbidden.

And that this is the absolute sense and meaning of the Apostle on this place, we averr is confirmed by all the learned, best and most faithful-Expositors and Annotators that ever wrote ; we know none dissent, or are of your Opinion.

Thirdly, Say you, Thus briefly having declar'd what Singing is, and how a Psalm or Spiritual Song, according to the Institution of our Lord Jesus ought to be brought in the Church, it from hence plainly, you say, appears, what manner of Singing is not his Ordinance :

Viz. 'That common Singing of a mixt multitude, consisting of Church-Members ; and hearers good and bad, Men, Women and Children, Professors and Prophane together.

Ans. You draw this Conclusion too soon ; for there seems no one Argument against such a singing yet, but you add then in the next place,

First, You say it was never so appointed for a standing Ordinance in the Church of the *Jews*, where there were Instruments of Musick and Singers appointed, which are done away in Christ.

1 *Reply*. As to singing Praises to God with Voices together in a mixt Congregation, that was a Duty performed by the Lords *Israel* before the Law was given forth, *Exod.* 15. 1, 2. and therefore though Musick and Singing-men ceased when Christ came, yet singing did not cease, because, as the Brethren have proved, it is part of Moral and Natural Religion, and therefore a standing Ordinance.

2. Because 'twas Practised by Christ and his Disciples in a Gospel-Congregation, with Voices together.

3. Because 'tis enjoined on the Gospel-Church without any New Directions given about it, or appropriating it to the Ministry only, or some one gifted Person, who was to sing by immediate Inspiration, as you conceive.

Secondly, You say it is most evident that now in the Gospel-times there is no such Institution of our Lord Jesus, &c.

Neither doth it, you say, comport with his spiritual Dispensation, who hath appointed his Church-Ordinances to be administered by none but such who are orderly added to the Church, and qualified by the Gifts of the Holy Spirit for it, being solemnly allowed or orderly called to such an Holy Exercise.

1. *Answer*. There is an Institution now in these Gospel times to sing Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, *Eph.* 5. 19. *Col.* 3. 16. and therefore it comports with this Spiritual Dispensation; as touching singing in a mixt Congregation, wherein the controversie lyes, it seems you so sing as well as others, for if you do not sing in a mixt Congregation with professors and prophane, you do not sing in the Church at all. Brother, take heed lest you condemn the thing which

which you allow ; do you sing or not in the Church ? You intimate *page 2.* 'tis a false Calumny or accusation to say you do not, pray then consider whether you do not suffer others in prayer to sing with you in your sence, nay all that will. Also you say, when one sings all may be said to sing, as in Prayer.

Obj. But may be you will say, they do not joyn their voices with yours.

Ans^r. Brother, is not their joyning their Hearts in your singing as you call it more in the sight of God, than a bare joyning the voice ; 'tis exprest *Eph. 5.* in the Heart as well as with the Voice. Pray consider this, and blame us no more for pleading for singing in such a mixt multitude.

2. Are none but such who are orderly added to the Church, and qualified by the Gifts of the Holy Spirit allowed to worship God with the Church ? Then you are a grievous Offendor, for we are sure you never worship God in his Church in any Gospel Ordinance save breaking of Bread, but all in your Assemblies are allowed or suffered to worship God with you : Is not hearing God's Word and Prayer spiritual Gospel Ordinances ? in the last you think you sing too, and do not your Congregation, when you perform these Duties, consist of Church Members good and bad, Men, and Women, and Children, professors and prophane together, and are not these Ordinances of our Lord Jesus ?

3. Why may we suffer others to pray and praise God with us, and not suffer them to sing his praise with us ?

4. You betray your Gospel Simplicity, we fear, by this Objection, since you do not allow of proper singing by the Church alone : we should think you made a more honest scruple in the case if you were for the Churches singing alone ; but you are against the Saints singing apart, as much as their singing with others.

5. Where

5. Where have we a Rule to put the Hearers out of our Assemblies when we are met to worship God? or to command them not to joyn their Hearts in Prayer with us, or their Voices and Hearts in singing Psalms, &c? Sure if it had been unlawful, we should have had some Directions in that matter.

6. We do not joyn with them in prayer, nor singing, tho they joyn with us; we will not suffer them to bring forth a Psalm or a Doctrine that are not godly, no more than to make them our mouth in prayer.

7. If they are enjoined to pray and praise God, and sing his praise too, tho they cannot do it acceptably without holy habits, and the exercise of Faith, then it can be no fault in us to suffer and permit them so to do: but the former you cannot deny, therefore we cannot be faulty to permit them so to do.

8. Singing of Psalms is full of Admonition and Spiritual Instruction, and some we can assure you have been wrought upon by their singing, such power it hath had upon their Souls; and shall we debarr them of such a precious Ordinance, that God has blessed to the Conversion of some Sinners Souls.

In page 7. you say, *This Common way of Singing is an invention suited to the humane Constitution of a National Church, where Believers and Unbelievers, Light and Darknes, Christ and Belial are put together, &c.*

1. *Ans^r.* If it be an Invention, pray who invented it, and in what Age of the World was it done? certainly you must charge it upon Moses, because he was the first we read of who put a mixt Congregation upon Singing the praises of God: you forget your self we fear, our dear Brother, for you cannot deny but that Congregation did so sing, yea, and a mixt Congregation it was also.

2. Tho in close Communion, in breaking of Bread, we are to separate our selves from Unbelievers, and must

must have no fellowship with them ; Yet a Gospel Church is not to separate in time of other Gospel Duties and Ordinances from such, nor do you call upon yours so to do ; pray Brother change your thoughts, and do not fight against the Truth, for you cannot stand before it, 'tis too strong to be overcome by fancies and fictions of Mens Minds.

But in pag. 7. you are bold again to affirm, *That Singing of composed Songs by all the Members of a Church, both Men and Women lifting up their Voices together, is not an Ordinance of our Lord Jesus* : Your further Reasons follow.

First, You say, *Because there is no such thing appointed by him, or recorded so to be in the Holy Scripture of the New Testament.*

I *Ans^w*. The Churches are commanded by the Holy Ghost to sing Scripture-psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs without exception: And this is recorded *Eph. 5. Col. 3.* We argue, that either the whole Church must sing all together, or else only some of them, or one single person only.

But since they are all enjoined to sing, or the Duty is required of the whole Church without exception, and not tyed or limited to any person or persons in particular, it follows, they are all to Sing, and so to Sing as the Lords People sung under the Old Testament, and Christ and his Disciples, who sung together ; had it been limited to the Elder, or some gifted person, we may be sure the Holy Ghost would have given directions in the case, or hinted at such a thing.

Secondly, In the second place you hint, *the whole Church, with every Member, had Communion together according to the Primitive Pattern, and wherein they continued, is expressly declared to be in the Apostles Doctrine and fellowship, breaking of Bread and Prayer, Acts 2. 42.* Here you say is not the least mention of their singing together, which if it had been practised in those times, as it is now by many, would it not have bin expressed ?

Reply. Brother, you confess Singing is an Ordinance

nance that was practised in the primitive Church, tho as you conceive by one single person only : Now if so, how comes it to pass this Argument of yours has any weight in it, since there is no more mention of one single persons singing than of the whole Churches? this is against any singing, and so against yours, as much as against that we contend for.

2. Dear Brother, you forget that Singing of Psalms was part of the Apostles Doctrine, and that they taught the Churches so to sing; we argue thus, If the Apostle taught the whole Church to sing, then such a singing was part of their Doctrine in which they continued : But the Apostles taught the whole Church to sing, *Ergo*, that was part of their Doctrine, in which that Church continued.

Thirdly, You object against the whole Church to sing, because Women are plainly forbidden to speak in the Church, that is, say you, to utter a Doctrine, or a Psalm, &c.

Ans. We have shewed your mistake in this; a Woman is only prohibited from teaching or preaching in the Church, she must not exercise authority over the Man. For to teach Authoritatively hath that contained in it; they are not forbidden to sing because under the Law they were (as we said before) permitted so to do, and they are not denyed any liberty in the Gospel Church, which they had and might have under the Law in that case.

Fourthly, You argue against such singing, *Because every Member of the Church, you say, is not capable to be exercised in that common way of Singing, for some have, you say, not a tuneable Voice, or natural Faculty of Singing, some may not understand immediately that composed Song read to them, may not be in a joyful frame, and so cannot sing all together with the Spirit, and Understanding, as is required, 1 Cor. 14. 15.*

Ans. We do not believe any one Member is totally without a tuneable Voice, or the faculty of Singing, tho some may not have it to that degree of acuteness as some others, no more than they may in Prayer

Prayer ; yet such who can't pray so elequently, or accurately express themselves, ought to pray nevertheless as well as they can, and so in Singing they may do it as well as they can.

2. They are all to joyn in Prayer in their Hearts with the Minister ; but may be some may not so clearly and immediately understand some of the expressions their Ministers use, and so with the Spirit and Understanding can't joyn in Prayer in their Hearts, and so with you in your way of singing.

3. Such who cannot, may forbear either joyning in such Expressions either with you, or us ; and such who are not in a joyful frame may forbear too ; we do not believe every one must sing always with the Church, or they sin : But tho' they may not be in a joyful frame, God nevertheless deserves his praises, and he is in a very bad frame indeed that is out of a frame to laud and praise the Name of God : the Apostle bids us rejoyce evermore, and tho' sorrowful, yet always rejoycing in the Lord.

Fifthly, *You say Singing is to be practised as that it may be for teaching and admonishing one another ; therefore, Col. 3. 16. some are to teach, and some to be taught : are all Teachers and all Admonishers at one time, but none taught, which is confusion ?*

1 *Ans^r.* By the way, this shews Singing is not part of Prayer, or praising of God in Prayer ; sure you do not use Prayer to teach or admonish one another.

2. The Psalm hath the teaching and admonishing in it, and all in singing Psalms may be said to teach, and yet all by the Psalm are taught and admonished. And since God hath commanded us to teach and admonish one another, viz. *In Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, singing and making melody in our Hearts to the Lord ;* how dare you contradict it, or oppose our so doing ? 'Tis a different way of teaching one another, than in the way of a Ministers preaching, and yet it is no confusion ; 'tis a teaching and admonishing one another

ther in singing of Psalms; and how all may be said in so doing to teach, and yet be taught, see Mr. *Keaches Book*, page 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 120. Did not *Moses* and the whole Congregation of *Israel* sing together, *Exod. 15. 1?* and were they not all nevertheless by that Song admonished, &c. and was that confusion?

'You say, if a Preacher should teach the people by uttering or speaking out a sentence of his Sermon, and all his hearers should say it or sing it after him, and so proceed, would this, say you, be reputed an orderly way for the instruction and edification of the people? So that this Scripture which is so frequently alleged to countenance common Singing, is a plain and evident witness, say you, against it, &c.

1 Reply. How many sentences of a Sermon may be contained in one or more of *David's Psalms*, which Psalm may be, and oft times is sung after the Sermon is ended, and yet the People may be sweetly, and in an orderly way instructed and edified thereby? for did not Gods people of old thus sing in the words of *David*, 2 Chron. 29. 30? Dare you say that way which God hath taught and commanded his people to teach and admonish one another, may not be reputed an orderly way for instruction and edification of them? evident it is he hath commanded them to teach and admonish one another in Psalms in singing, *Col. 3. 16.*

2. We thus reason, Either the Apostle gives directions in those Scriptures, *Eph. 5. 19. Col. 3. 16.* to Ministers to preach from, or out of Psalms, Hymns, &c. or to them to pray and praise God in prayer, or else he enjoyns them to be found in some other Ordinance or Duty, distinct or quite different from either of the other, namely, to sing Psalms, Hymns, &c.

1. Now he can't intend Preaching, or Directions to Ministers, because he doth not say, Admonish one another from or out of Psalms, but in Psalms: Nor is there any shadow of reason why the Apostle should give

give particular Directions to Ministers to Preach out of the Psalms.

2. Because in the same breath, as we may say, he exhorts them to sing; so that according to all wise and worthy Expositors, he means no other Teaching than that which is in singing of Psalms, &c.

3. Because he doth not direct his words to Ministers, but to the whole Church, even to all that are to be filled with the Spirit, and to have the Word of Christ to dwell richly in them, which is every Man and Womans Duty; all that were or are filled with the Fruits of Righteousness, or who have true Grace in their Hearts, or have cause to rejoyce in God, are required to sing Psalms.

2. It cannot intend Prayer, or Praising of God in Prayer, because thereby we only speak to God, and not to Teach and Admonish one another. If we are no where in Holy Scripture said in Prayer, or Praising of God in Prayer, to Teach and Admonish one another, then such an Exposition is to be exploded as erroneous; but in Prayer, &c. we are no where said to Teach or Admonish one another:

Therefore it must intend some other Duty or Ordinance that is distinct or different to both the former, *viz.* That of Teaching and Admonishing one another in Psalms, by singing of them together.

So that in opposition to what you say, these places so frequently alledged do not only countenance that which you call common singing, but positively enjoins it on the Churches.

Sixthly, 'This common way of Singing, you say, 'cannot be allowed in the Church, because the Members cannot by lifting up their Voices sing together, 'but it must be by some composed set stinted form of 'some ones making, which they must have read to 'them, or they must read it themselves line after 'line, and so to sing (say you) doth not appear to 'be the Mind and Will of our Lord Jesus.

1 Reply. Are not the Psalms of David, and other Scrip-

Scripture Songs set and stinted Forms? and because they are so, must they not be allowed in the Church? God, it appears, doth enjoin them, and therefore allows them tho' you will not.

2. But why must they be composed Forms of some ones making? hath not the Holy Ghost left us in the Holy Scripture, Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs? we plead for no other Psalms but such that are of the Spirits composing, or composed by the Spirit.

3. We see where your sore is, you are for Singing by Inspiration, *viz.* Psalms given immediately by some special Gift, and hence are against the whole Churches Singing; because if you should have such a special Psalm to bring forth, others you foresee cannot sing with you; but the same Psalm you must read or pronounce to them, and so it would be a stinted Form to others as well as Scripture-psalms are so. Brother, how could all the Congregation of *Israel* Sing with *Moses*, if he did not, or some others, read or pronounce each line to them?

4. But why do you say so to sing doth not appear to be the Mind and Will of God? you proceed, and say,

1. 'Because he never appointed or commanded that one person should write or indite a Prayer or Song for another; nor did he promise a Blessing to them in their so doing in his New Testament.

Reply. God hath appointed and commanded his people to sing Psalms, Hymns or Spiritual Songs, which are left on record in the Scripture as to the matter of them; and he has as much appointed one person to set them in order to be sung, as he hath appointed or commanded any person to indite a Sermon to preach it.

2. In vain is all you speak, about writing or inditing prayers for another; for God himself hath made, appointed and given us a book of Psalms, but no such Common-prayer-book: Had the Holy Ghost compiled a Form of Prayers, as he hath a Form of Psalms, and commanded us so to pray, as he hath enjoined us

so to sing, must we have rejected them? Singing of Psalms is of Divine Authority, say you what you please, if our Bible be of Divine Authority:

But Secondly, 'You say such singing doth not appear to be the Will of God, because the Lord hath expressly declared, that this Religious Singing ought to proceed from the Word dwelling richly in them, Col. 3. 16. And being filled with the Spirit, Eph. 5. 18. Now, say you, if they may or ought to sing by a set, stinted, composed form that is before them, it is then but reading or hearing of a Psalm or a Song read to them, and then they are sufficiently furnished for this solemn work, tho' they are never so empty of the Word of Truth, or destitute of the Spirit, or indeed grossly ignorant, which is in downright terms to contradict the Counsel and Command of the Sovereign Lord, &c.

1 Reply. 'Tis well you do acknowledge there is a religious singing: But Brother, who of us plead for such a carnal empty sort of Singing as you speak of? Do we in order to a Religious Singing, say there needs no more but the knowledge of the matter to be sung, viz. the Psalm to be read to us? we say all that sing ought to sing with the Spirit, and with Grace in their Hearts: So that here you beat the Air, for we detest such a Singing which you mention.

2. As touching the Word of Christ dwelling richly in us, to which you might have added in all wisdom in those who sing Spiritually, 'tis absolutely necessary: But pray remember, 'tis the Word of Christ we have upon record, 'tis not some new inspired matter immediately given in, nor doth singing require more of that Soul-enriching, indwelling Word of Christ, than in Preaching, Prayer, Meditation, &c. the Word of Christ ought to dwell in us richly in all wisdom, as Dr. Wright shews, that so we may know when and how to pray, when and what to preach,

C

when

when and how to hear, when and how to read, when and how to meditate, and when and how Spiritually to sing *Dauids Psalms*, or other Scripture Hymns and Spiritual Songs. Many excellent Duties, as he shews p. 63. may be spoiled in the observation of them; there may be a *praying* which is sin, *reading* and not considering, *hearing* a favour of death, *partaking of the Lords Supper* to Judgment, *giving all to the poor*, and profit nothing, and a singing of Gods praises, and soon forget his works, or without Grace in the Heart, or be ignorant of the Soul-enriching Word, and destitute of the Spirit: Therefore as Singing, so all other Duties ought to be performed in the Spirit, and with Understanding and Grace in the Heart to the Lord: and to a right singing of Scripture-psalms, &c. 'tis needful the Word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom, not as touching the bringing forth of a Psalm, as to the matter of it, so much as to a Spiritual singing of that Psalm with Grace, Wisdom, and Divine Influences. Singing Psalms, saith he, is to be reverently performed for Gods Glory and Honour, and not for the pleasing our selves: So that one must suit his inward Thoughts to the matter; if it be of praise to God, our Hearts must be elevated and cheerful; if in the Psalm or Hymn, *Petitions* be contained, fervent; if *threatning*, great awe of God; if *deliverance*, raised hope; if *Judgment*, fear; if *Duty*, holy purpose to obey; if *Promises*, to believe; if *Prophecy*, expectation: Thus the Word in all wisdom should dwell in us, that so we may know how to sing to the Glory of God, and our own Instruction, Comfort and Consolation as in other Duties. Some have lately told you, that the Word of Christ is to be in us richly, as well to help us to compile a Scripture Hymn, as to compile a Scripture Sermon; but we conclude it ought to dwell in all richly as in one, not so much (as we said afore) to bring forth a Psalm, as to a right Spiritual singing of Psalms, Hymns and Divine Songs. 'Tis a great mistake to suppose the Spirit ought

ought so to dwell richly in us, as immediately to inspire us to bring forth a Psalm both Matter, Manner, and Tune in an extraordinary sort.

1. Because we are exhorted to let it dwell in us richly, 'tis press'd upon the Saints in general as their Duty, so to be filled with it; special Gifts were only given to some, and not taught as a Duty to be attained by all, but as a promise, given to some in particular, as the Spirit distributed to every man that had them as he pleased.

2. Nor can it be proved the matter of the Psalm spoken of in 1 Cor. 14. was immediately given when they were met together. But they had a Doctrine, had a Psalm, &c. when first they came together, 1 Cor. 14. 26. *How is it brethren? when you come together, every one of you hath a Psalm, hath a Doctrine, &c.* they were not to wait for them, but had them ready; so that the Church was not at uncertainty about them, which might be a Psalm of David, we reading of no other so called; and they might bring it forth in some extraordinary manner, and may be in an unknown Tongue, which they were not permitted to do, unless there was an Interpreter, that so others might joyn with him that had it: For that word, *When I pray, I will pray with the Spirit, and with the Understanding also*, doth not mean only when he was alone, but when in the Church; that others might pray with him; and so he would when he sung, *Sing with the Spirit, and with the understanding also*; not only when alone, but also in the Church, that others might sing with him. And since we never read of any one Mans singing alone in any Church-Assembly, we do affirm, such a practice would be a meer Humane Innovation, and to be abominated.

Thirdly, You say, 'If singing be principally intended for a solemn praising of God, which praising is the highest service we can perform to him, it most naturally and directly tending to the honour of his Glorious Name: If then (say you) a com-

‘posed, stinted Form of anothers making may
 ‘be used in Singing, why may it not much more be
 ‘used in Prayer, which is in comparison a lower sort
 ‘of Worship?

1 Reply. We say a stinted form of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs are left in Gods Word as composed by the Spirit, which the Churches are required and exhorted to sing; of which Dr. *Wright* tells you in his Treatise, there are about twelve in singing still, if that will do, in the New Testament, pag. 15. besides a multitude in the Old Testament, as proper to be sung as they, and are in the Original in Metre too: Had there been such stinted Forms of prayer left in Gods Word as composed by the Spirit, and we enjoined so to pray, what objection could have been against the using of them we know not?

2. You would have a Psalm given by immediate Inspiration, and so sung by a special Gift, or you would have none at all: we know none of your mind, and of the Mind of your party, except those called the sweet Singers of *Israel*.

But we positively deny there were ever any such Psalms brought into the Churches of Christ, and do require you to give us but one example of such a bringing forth of a Psalm, viz. the matter, manner, and Tune, and all by immediate Inspiration, or special gift, and sung by one Man alone, for we have shewed that 1 *Cor.* 14. proves no such thing. Also we would know if there should be such Psalms given now, or hereafter, as you hint there were in the Apostolical Church, whether such Psalms would not be of equal Authority to Canonical Scripture? also were there such Psalms then given; how comes it to pass we have them not left in Gods Word, seeing we have others left on record?

3. But could you prove some did bring forth such Psalms, by a special Gift, in the Gospel day, what would that signifie, since it would follow, and could not be denyed but they brought forth

forth their Doctrines, &c. also, by the same miraculous and extraordinary Spirit, and we must no more attempt to preach without such an extraordinary Gift, than not to sing Psalms without the said extraordinary and special Gift, but must throw off all Ordinances till those Gifts return: if what you say be true,

4. Why do you say Prayer is a lower sort of worship than Singing, we utterly deny it: What Duty is more sublime or sacred than right Spiritual prayer? But tho' prayer be so great a Duty, and we have no stinted Forms left for it, yet in singing, which is also a great Gospel Duty, we have a stinted Form mentioned. A psalm can't be a psalm, as we told you once already, without a set and stinted Form; all also may pray together without a stinted Form, but all cannot sing together without they know the set Psalm, Hymn and Spiritual Song: So that from the Nature of Singing, or how it differs from prayer, we argue, there is a necessity of the one and not of the other. Could the Disciples have sung that Hymn with Christ unless the matter sung were spoken out, or pronounced to them? Therefore tho' we condemn as well as you the composing, using and imposing set Forms of Prayer, yet we shew and prove that set Forms of Singing *Dauids* Psalms, and other Scripture Hymns composed by the Holy Spirit, are of Divine Institution; and hereby we do not contradict our Testimony against the former sort of Will-worship, page 8. of your Epistle. And from hence in opposition to what you there say, we affirm, this Argument of yours carries no weight nor demonstration in it at all, against that you call the common way of Singing. Nor do we give up the Cause in the least, for which we have suffered in testifying against a Form of humane Antichristian or Popish prayers. Nor is our alledging against you, that liberty which you may, and many pious Ministers do take in composing a set and stinted form of preaching without force of argu-

ment; for we affirm, and will, God assisting, maintain it, there is to every degree as much ground for others to object against setting (by careful study) as the Spirit shall enable us, a set Form of a Sermon to be preached, as there is for you to condemn the composing or setting in order by the help of the Spirit a Scripture-psalm, Hymn, or Spiritual Song to be sung: To say Preachers do not confine themselves to that set Form they have studied, we say is not true of many of them, tho' may be you do not so confine your self; and will you affirm they that do so, do not preach Spiritually, but by a humane stinted form; we must assure you should you so speak, it will beget another controverſie as hot as this; and what will the effects of your Essay be, think you, in the end, should you thus proceed? is the Sermon Humane if every word be pre meditated, that he afterwards delivers? And may not a Minister preach over again the same Sermon, *verbatim*, to another Congregation and be justified: See that place *Acts* 13. 42.

The true state of the Case depending is this, *viz.* preaching is Gods Ordinance, but no particular set stinted Form or method of preaching is laid down in the Gospel. Therefore let us not condemn one another, but leave each man to his liberty, so be he preaches, and the like also in singing, provided singing be not wholly omitted from such groundless pretences, or a practice brought in the room of it that never was used in Gods Church. None sound in the Faith pretend to preach by immediate Inspiration, or by an extraordinary Gift, but by the ordinary Gifts, by studying the Mediate written word, and the Spirit may help us to study, and pre-meditate every word we intend to speak, and yet our preaching may be Spiritual, and be as successful as if we studied not, but speak only what comes into our Minds when we deliver it; nay, and how unprofitable and confused generally such Mens preaching is,
all

all Men know, who preach extemporally : so Singing is Gods Ordinance, but none who are sound in the Faith pretend to sing Psalms by immediate Inspiration ; nor is there any more ground to wait for a special gift to sing than to preach ; and how confused such extemporary Singing might be, all may foresee : 'Tis easie to pretend to a Gift, and so deceive the people as some do, who pretend they preach by immediate Inspiration. And unless the person can work Miracles to prove he sings by an immediate Spirit, or a special Gift, who would believe him? nay, and there is more ground for a set, stinted Form of singing than of preaching, because the Scripture-psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs are left in Gods Word as set, and stinted pre-composed Forms, and cannot be without such Forms ; 'tis a small variation to put the Scripture-Psalm, &c. into *English* Metre, without which they could not be melodiously sung according to the Precept, and the proper Nature of Singing : it seems to us that you would have such a sort of singing as the Quakers have of preaching. Suppose a Controversie should arise amongst Gods people from what you say against singing, and some should say there is no ground for a set, and stinted Form of preaching, but say preaching must be performed from a special immediate or extraordinary Gift, as in the Apostles time, and so from thence will preach no more ; they doubtless would have as much ground so to do as you have to cast off or oppose all singing of Psalms, from the same foot of an account, and pretend to wait for the return of those Gifts that were in the Gospel Church.

Fourthly, 'You say you shall speak somewhat to those Scriptures in the New Testament, which are alledged for this common singing ; the first is that in *Matth. 26. 30. Mark 14. 26.* where it is said, they sung an Hymn, that is, Christ and his Disciples after they had broke Bread, in Greek, they having hymned, from *hymneo*. These Scriptures being the chief, you

say, by the mistaken apprehension of which this common singing is usher'd in, and steals into the Churches, you tell us you shall be the more large in speaking to them.

Reply. 'Tis your mistake, the chief Scriptures we alledge for the Church to sing together, are those in *Eph. 5. Col. 3.* which enjoyns singing, they are clear precepts; these are, 'tis true, the chief that are alledged for singing after the Lords Supper. Also singing is no otherwise ushered into the Churches than Believers Baptism was: Nor doth it steal in, but comes in lawfully by the Authority both of Precept and Example; however, we will examine your Answers to these Texts.

First, *It is to be considered, say you, that several Learned Expositors do assert, That this Hymn did belong to the Passeeover, and not to the Supper, the Lords Supper being instituted before the whole Solemnity of the Passeeover was finished, with the Bread and Wine that was appointed for it: which being finished, they concluded with an Hymn, as the Jews were wont to do at such seasons. If it then did appertain to the Passeeover, it was done away with it, p. 9.*

Reply. Why did you not recite those Learned Expositors you mention? for tho we know and grant some learned Expositors do affirm, That the Jews ended their Passeeover by singing a Psalm, yet they cannot prove what they say. Also we know none who say this Hymn which our Saviour and his Disciples sung, did appertain to the Passeeover; nor do any Learned Expositors assert one single person alone ever sung after the Lords Supper.

2. Here first of all you seem to confound the Passeeover and the Sacred Ordinance of the Lords Supper together, intimating, the Passeeover was not finished till after the Supper was celebrated; which is enough to cause some weak Christians to question whether there be such an entire Gospel Ordinance as the Lords Supper or no; or if there be, whether we ought

ought not before, to eat a Lamb, or Legs of Mutton
some do:

3. But do not mistake your self, 'tis positively said, that after (*Christ took the Bread, and gave thanks, &c. and gave it to his Disciples, and said eat, this is my Body, and took the Cup, and gave thanks, and said, drink ye all of it, for this is my Blood of the New Testament: &c.*) They sung a Hymn, the singing of this Hymn was the very last thing they did before they went out into the Mount of Olives, *Mat. 26. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.* your first Answer is but to blot paper, or rather to cloud the matter; for did this Hymn appertain to the Passover, then here is no mention made of Christs raising God any ways at all after the celebration of the Ordinance of the Supper.

Secondly, But suppose, say you, it did belong to the Lords Supper, yet that expression, They sung, &c. doth not prove that they lifted up their Voices together; but rather that there was such a consent or harmony in their Hearts, that it was as much the action of them all, as if they had spoken together: So we read *Acts 4. 24.* it is expressed, that they lifted up their Voices together with one accord, and said, &c. Doth any person understand that they spake those words every one of them with an audible Voice together? surely no; but that there was such a Harmony of their Hearts in that prayer, that it was as much to be reputed every ones prayer, as if they had each one spoken it with their mouths.

1 Reply. Brother, you forget 'tis read they hymned, from the Greek word *hymneo*: pray where do you read where tis said any prayed, or praised God only in prayer, they hymned? Or secondly, Where do you read, when many lifted up their Voice, and hymned, or sung, but only one sung, and the other only consented or harmonied in their Hearts, and sung not? Many (as our Brethren and others shew you) may be said to pray together, tho but one is the mouth; but many cannot be said to sing together, by consenting, or liking, or joyning in their Hearts with what

what is sung, when but only one person indeed sing, no more than many may be said to preach together, by consenting, or joyning in their Heart with what one Man preaches, there is such a natural difference between singing, preaching, and praying.

2. Why do you not answer what Renowned Cotton, Dr. Roberts, Mr. Sidenham, Mr. Caryl, Mr. W. Mr. Fesse, Mr. Knowles, Mr. Keach, Dr. Wright, Whinnel, Mr. Ford, &c. have said in full confutation of this mistake of yours. There is no proper Heart-singing, nor Heart-preaching, tho' there is prayer mental, or Heart-praying: Singing is only an act of the Voice, and so understood by all Mankind; and a lye, to say all sung, if but one only sung, but it is not to say all prayed, when only one was the mouth. Unless you had answered what those worthy persons have said, in vain is all you say upon this account: and as touching that Text, *Acts 4. 24.* you are not ignorant we suppose that some do affirm, and are not without great probability, that they lifted up their Voices in singing part of the second *Psalms*; all know there is a saying or speaking in singing: *And when they had prayed, the house was shaken,* verse 31. So that they might as far as you know, first lift up their Voices together in singing the second *Psalms*, and afterwards end in prayer.

2. Others conclude they all in a miraculous manner lifted up their Voices together in prayer, all singing the same words; others, that they all said Amen at the close.

3. We have shewed all may be said to pray together when but one is the mouth, by joyning in their petitions in their Hearts: But so it is not in singing, proper singing being an act of the Voice, none can be said to sing unless their Voices are heard; so that this Text helps you not: How often do a multitude hear one Person sing some affecting Song, with which they are raised in their Spirits, and seem to eat even words.

ord : now because this is so, can they be all said to sing
at Song ? You must say it, if what you speak is true,
and how ridiculous that is, we will leave all to judge.

Thirdly, Neither doth it (say you) appear that they
sung, every one with their Voices together, because it
said, vers. 26. *tho he blessed the Bread, which was the
solemn Speech of one ; it's said, They sung, &c. which should
seem to imply as if they did speak together in singing ; but,
by you, it doth not appear by that expression, because our
Lord Jesus, it is most likely, in his Institution of that Or-
dinance, might or did give thanks and bless, in the sin-
gular number, as speaking only by himself, he being appointed
and anointed in a peculiar manner to bless his people, and
his Ordinance which he had instituted ; for this we find
usually did before others on several occasions, Mat. 11. 25.
John 11. 41. Joh. 17. But, say you, at the conclusion of
that Ordinance his Disciples being refresh'd with that Hea-
venly Banquet, their praises and thanks to God for his
great love then manifested to them, might be expressed in
the plural number, as that it might be manifest that they all
with united Hearts joyned in praising of God, as if it had
been spoken by every one of them, according to the fore-cited
scripture, Acts 4. 24.*

1 Reply. You say it doth not appear that they
sung every one with their Voices together, &c. shew
as there is any true or proper singing without the
Voice, and we will give you the Cause, we say there
is none.

2. For you to intimate that the Disciples did not
joyn in their Hearts with our Lord Jesus, when he
gave thanks, or blessed the Bread and the Cup, may
lead our people to err in Judgment, and be dange-
rous in making weak Christians (since it comes out of
a Pastors mouth) to think, that in the Blessing of
those Elements, there is something more contain-
ed than all good Protestants affirm, because the Disciples
were not admitted to joyn with their Master in that
service, tho Apostles who were to administer it after-
wards themselves.

3. It

3. It also would follow, sith that action of Lord Jesus is to be our Rule, whether an ordinary Minister may be allowed to give thanks over Bread, and so over the Cup, or not? or if he may, that the Members of the Church may well conclude they are not, ought not to be allowed to joyn with him; for otherwise that is no perfect pattern for to celebrate the Lords Supper. Nor do those Scriptures you cite stand you in any stead: Doth it follow because a Minister sometimes prays alone, that therefore when he is engaged in prayer in a publick Confluence with the Church, he must pray in the singular number? 'tis not said he took Bread, and said thank thee, or Father I pray thee bless this Bread, all know when there are forty at Supper, and he gives thanks, and they all joyn with him, yet 'tis he that speaks the words gives thanks.

4. What reason do you give why the Disciples should be allowed to joyn with their Master at Conclusion, and not at the first giving of thanks? one; you beg the cause instead of arguing; but we test your supposition, and see you are hard put to evade the Truth of God, and suggest that which is most unlikely and dangerous to affirm.

5. You would have the last to be no more than simple praising of God, and yet 'tis said they sung Hymn: hard case! Who shall the unlearned believe Mr. Steed, or our Learned Translators, and a great body of Learned and pious Men, who well understood the Greek Tongue? Austin on Psalm 52. we find speaking thus, (*viz.*) *Hymni sunt laudes Dei cum cantico, si sit laus & non sit dei, non est Hymnus; si sit laus, Dei laus, & non cantetur, non est Hymnus; oportet ergo si sit hymnus, habeat hæc tria, & laudem, & Dei, cantum.* That is, Hymns are the praises of God with a Song; if it be praise, and not the praise of God, it is not a Hymn; if it be the praise of God, and not with Song, neither is it a Hymn, which must have the three in it, *viz.* praise, the praising of God, and the

with a Song, or in singing. The very same saith Learned Dr. Duveil, on *Acts* 16. 25. 'Hymns, saith he, are Songs which contain the praise of God; if it be praise and not of God, it is not a Hymn; if it be praise, and of God, if it be not sung, it is not a Hymn. And Mr. Henry Fesse in his *Greek Lexicon* saith, the Greek word *ὕμνω*, to sing, to celebrate, *ὕμνω*, the same *ὕμνω*, a Hymn, or Song, *Act.* 16. 25. *Mat.* 26. 30. 'An Hymn, saith he, is a Song whereby the praises of God are sung; if therefore they hymned all, they sung all, unless there is a proper singing without the voice.

Fourthly, *But suppose they did then sing speaking together, which yet there is, say you, no evidence for, as was before mentioned; yet we do not find any ground why that example should be obliging now to the Churches, for it appears that there were some circumstances in that first institution as there was in the first celebration of the Passeeover, that are not obliging afterwards, as the entering upon it after Supper, and washing the Disciples feet (as is most probable) after it: Joh. 13. 24. So neither doth this kind of Singing appear to be a Duty to be performed as a continuing Ordinance.*

1 Reply. Brother, who denies but there was some circumstances in the first Institution that are not obliging? yet can you, or any wise man think that part of Religious Worship to be a Circumstance? for you dare not deny but praising of God in singing, or without singing is a great part of Religious Worship, therefore no circumstantial matter, as that after Supper, and in an upper room, and in the night, &c.

2. It may appear to all, that the other great part of the Ordinance, *viz.* That of giving of Thanks, or blessing of the Bread and Wine, is no Rule for us, not obliging us according to your Notion, since you intimate our Lord Jesus performed it alone, not suffering his Disciples to joyn in their Spirits with him; if this is not to curtail the Sacred Ordinance, we know nothing.

3. Nor

3. Nor if this be granted; have you any ground (from what Christ and his Disciples) did, to praise God at the close of the Ordinance, no more than we have to sing an Hymn: Sure our people are willing to be missed, if they see not your strange mistake to say no worse, from the esteem we have of your person and station; we desire all that doubt of singing an Hymn, well to observe your varying Answers; and the little of solid argument there is in any one of them; but we will examine your three Reasons which you conclude, if they did then sing an Hymn together, yet that is not obliging to the Churches.

1. 'Because, say you, we do not find it recorded in the relation of the celebration of this Ordinance by the Churches, after the Ascension of our Lord Jesus, when they were fully settled and established.

Reply. We find no mention of the form or manner of the celebration of this Ordinance in any one Church. Had there been a relation of one Churches manner of celebration of the Lords Supper, and no singing at the conclusion of it, and yet an account of all the other parts; your first Reason might seem to have some weight in it, but since we have no such instances, there is nothing at all in this.

2. 'Because, say you, when the Apostle Paul gives an account of the performance of that Ordinance, he received it from the Lord Jesus, he makes no mention of their singing together at the ending of it, tho' he doth particularly declare the manner of it's celebration; which certainly would have been, had it been a concluding Ordinance continually to be practised, as some do affirm it ought to be. he doth not indeed make mention of returning thanks at the end of it, nor was there any need it should be mentioned, because it necessarily and naturally follows, that after kindness and Grace received, we should return a thankful acknowledgment, we being commanded in every thing to give thanks: Therefore tho' we have no particular Precept or Exam-

ple for it, yet we give thanks at the end of our Meals as well as crave a blessing at the beginning of them, as that which naturally follows our being refresh'd by the bounty and blessing of God: But for singing together, say you, it being a more than ordinary circumstance, that hath several things appertaining to it; had it been intended as a Duty, at such a season, as there was great reason it should be so, no question but it would have been mentioned: And without Controversie, the solemn giving of thanks after the Supper, is the substance of what was intended by the Hymn; neither doth the Greek word restrain it to singing, but to a general giving of thanks, p. 10, 11.

1 Reply. What you say here, must not be admitted by any means; nor doth there seem any congruity, or Gospel simplicity in your Answer, for at the close you clearly grant the Hymn doth intend a general rule for giving of thanks, yet at the beginning seem utterly to deny that the Hymn is any ways binding on us, or a rule for us: And that first, because *Paul* doth not mention it in *1 Cor. 11. 23.* where he gives an account of the Institution of the Supper.

2. We say the Institution is the perfect pattern and Rule for us to follow, which that Church and all others the Apostle well knew had the perfect knowledge of: And remarkable tis, the Apostle leaves out another part of the Solemnity, he does not mention that our Saviour when he took the Cup gave thanks, as well as he doth not mention the Hymn: Therefore in the celebration of that Ordinance, we and all Ministers go to the Institution, *Mat. 26. 26. Jesus took Bread, and blessed it, &c. vers. 27. and he took the Cup and gave thanks:* So that if you administer it according to that in *1 Cor. 11.* and not exactly according to the Institution; you must leave out giving thanks when you take the Cup, which if you did, who would break Bread with you, because not done according to the pattern.

3. More-

3. Moreover, you know in the administration of Baptism you as well as we go to the words of the institution, and not to the relation of the words mentioned after the Ascension of Christ, when persons were baptized. In the *Acts* we read of several baptized, and not one word expressed, of the *Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, yet were so baptized no doubt.

4. The Apostle as you your self take notice, do not mention returning thanks after they had done, well as he speaks not of the Hymn, and you suppose there was no need of it, as if our wisdom might teach that, since we give thanks after our meals: Brother, the Ordinance of the Lords Supper is another kind of thing than our common meals, we do not give thanks when we take the Cup to drink: Sir, Mans wisdom must make no Supplement to the holy Supper.

5. It appears by your arguing against Singing, that in your Conscience praising of God in Prayer is not singing, otherwise there is no room for a trial of skill to evade it: And as to the Greek word, we have shewed, (as our Translators do affirm, and other Learned in the Greek Tongue, do restrain it to singing, &c.) that 'tis not an Hymn, if not a Song, and sung to the praise of God. Do not some of you know what the Greek word imports, as well as others? and have not our Brethren said enough in their late Treatises upon that account, to which you give no Reply. Could you produce three ancient Grecians who render the word otherwise, we may bring threescore who contradict them. But whom few may compare with, translates it *ὕμνησαντες*, *quum hymnum cecinissent*, When they had sung an Hymn: *Schrevelius* and *Hill* in their Lexicons, *ὕμνεω*, *Celebro hymnum cæno*: And is it wisdom in you to give a contrary sense to our faithful and learned Translators? and do not other ignorant persons betray their great weakness, who do confront our last and best Translators, fly to an old corrupted Translation

Translation in *Sion Collegde*. Moreover, if the Greek word doth not restrain it to singing, then it foliows in your Judgment, that simple or bear giving of thanks is not singing; by which you give away the Cause, and implicitly acknowledge you never sing at all in a proper sence: But to proceed, If you will not mind the Pattern, by the help of God we will.

There is the like parity of Reason also for singing, after that wonderfull manifestation of Gods rich Grace and Bounty, as there is for simple praise; for never greater cause to be spiritually merry, and rejoyce in God, than when we receive such a Seal and Token of his Eternal Love and Favour to our Souls in that Redemption we have through Christs Blood.

Thirdly, *Such a kind of Singing an Hymn you say, is not to be practised now, because we find the uttering or singing of a Psalm or Hymn in the Church, was by command of the Lord to be manag'd after another manner, as appears from the before mentioned, 1 Cor. 14. 26.*

Reply. This is meerly to beg the Cause; that manner of Singing you referr to is but your own private Conceit and Opinion, which we have answered already. The practice of our Saviour is a perfect Rule, and we cannot err while we follow it, for he is set forth as an Example for us in his Obedience in the discharge of Gospel Ordinances: Had we not a Mind to spare you, how justly might you be exposed by your strange and cloudy reasonings? If the Copy is to be imitated in one thing, why not in another?

2. You do but suppose Singing was manag'd after another manner, from that Text *1 Cor. 14. 26. viz.* by one single person, and that too by a special or extraordinary Gift in Gods ordinary worship, which you prove not, nor can you whilst you live on Earth: Is it not said, with the voice together *they shall sing, Isa. 52. 8?*

3. And suppose it was then manag'd by such a gift; was not preaching or a Doctrine, &c. also manag'd by the same kind of Gifts, and must we not preach &c. now, because no such Gifts?

D

Object.

Object. *The second Objection you pretend to answer, is that about Paul and Silas's singing praise to God, Acts 16. 25.*

1. 'To this, you say, p. 11. *Paul and Silas pray'd as well as sang praises, and were heard by the prisoners: Can we think, (say you) that when they prayed they spake both together? Why then should any suppose they lifted up their Voices together in singing praises, the Holy Spirit gives no other account of the one than of the other?*

Reply. We say to you in answer; why should any think the Holy Ghost speaks in the Clouds, or unintelligibly? When they prayed no body doubts but that one only was the mouth; but if they both sung, then one did not sing alone, because all Mankind understand the act of Singing, as has been proved, differs quite from that of praying. Many may, we tell you again, be truly and properly said to pray together, when only one is the mouth, but many cannot be said to sing together, if but one single person only truly and properly sings.

2. Therefore tho' the prisoners heard them, 'tis not to be thought they heard both their Voices when they prayed, but yet did hear both their Voices when they sung.

3. Had it been no more than praising of God in Prayer, the Holy Ghost had not added, *and sung praises*; strange! you will distinguish no better on the Natures of differing Ordinances, according to the common understanding of all Mankind! Do you always when you praise God, or give thanks for your meat and drink, before or after meat, sing? would not any Body of understanding smile at you, should you so speak?

2. 'You say we may safely conclude they did not sing by lifting up their Voices together, because we may judge that the Apostle knowing the Mind of the Lord in that particular, which he could and did com-

communicate unto others, would not allow himself or his Companion to be transgressors of it.

1 Reply. Dear Brother, you argue not at all; strange! that such lines should come from such a Pen: You take that for granted which you prove not, and which we deny by force of argument. We say the Apostle well knew singing with Voices together was the practice of the Lords people under the Law, and that so Christ and his Disciples sung, and therefore so he and *Silas* sung, and were no transgressors.

2. And since *Paul* and *Silas*, who you say, knew the Mind of the Lord in that particular sung, together; we say so it is our Duty to do, and they that do it not, neglect a Gospel Duty.

Object. The third Objection you pretend to answer, is from that in *Jam. 5. 13*. Is any merry, let him sing Psalms.

This Scripture, you say, is no direction for a Church assembled to employ themselves in singing together: But how a particular person in a joyful frame ought to manage his Mirth, or Comfort to the Glory of God. Certainly it can never be a right Inference, say you, that because a single person when chearful or comfortable, is exhorted to sing praise to God, therefore to conclude, that it is the Duty of the Church of Christ in its publick Assembly to have all the Members sing together with Artificial Rhimes, and Tunes, a composed Song, or Psalm, tho not commanded so to do, and although they be not in a joyful frame, is a strange inference.

1 Reply. We in the first place cannot but observe how clearly you here give away the Cause, viz. do not you plainly intimate, that singing is a different thing from Prayer, or common ordinary praising of God in Prayer; for if you do not grant this, there is nothing in what you say, for as one man ought so to praise God when in a joyful frame, so you know ought a whole Church together to do the same. Pray consider of this, it looks ill upon you.

2. We do not urge this Text to prove a whole Assembly ought to sing together, and you know it well enough ; but to prove that singing is some other Act, Duty, or Thing than that of praising of God you plead for, and would have to be Gospel-singing : But however, we would willingly know, or be informed, if one Man when glad, or sees cause to rejoyce in the Lord, may and ought to sing, why many, if in the same frame, may not sing, and sing together.

3. However, you are short in this Duty, when merry, or see cause to rejoyce in the Lord as a single person ; do you ever sing Psalms ? we hope you sometimes are merry in the Lord, certainly you cannot conclude this intends some special Gift : Had every one that was merry or joyful in the Lord, a special Gift to sing ? or can you think the Apostle puts them upon a Duty they were not in a capacity to perform ? 'Tis not left at the liberty of a person that is in a joyful frame to sing Psalms if he pleases, but he is as much required to sing Psalms as a person afflicted is to pray.

4. As to *Rhime, Tunes, &c.* if there be a singing of Psalms (a proper singing we mean) without Tunes, Metre, &c. you may so sing, tho we know none. Rhime we do not say is essential to singing, tho Verse or Metre is, but blame us not we so sing, seeing you positively affirm it is not unlawful. Talk no more of composed Psalms, you know *David's* Psalms were composed by the Spirit of God, and Scripture-songs are as Sacred as Scripture prose ; we know no Psalms but those called *David's* Psalms.

2. 'Yon say this Singing here directed unto, is
'when a person is merry, or comfortable, which
'certainly is to be suitable to his praying when af-
'flicted and sorrowful, which is not by reading a
'prayer of anothers composing, but by pouring out
'his

' his Soul in earnest Requests to God, as he shall be
 ' assisted by the Holy Spirit. In like manner, the
 ' Singing here intended is not the reading and tuning
 ' of a Psalm out of a Book, or writing of anothers
 ' composing ; but his solemn expressing the praise of
 ' God, and his joyful thanks to God, as the Holy Spi-
 ' rit doth assist him with a tuneable Voice, or other-
 ' wise: shall Prayer be with the Spirit, and singing
 ' praises, which is the highest worship be by a form ?
 ' Surely, say you, we are otherwise directed by the
 ' Word of God, 1 Cor. 14. 15. And we are coun-
 ' sell'd to labour to *be filled with the Spirit*, if we
 ' will speak to our selves in Psalms and Hymns, Eph.
 ' 5. 19. which if it may be performed by reading and
 ' tuning a Psalm or Song indited for us, may it not
 ' be by a person in a carnal as much as by one in a
 ' Spiritual state and frame. This Singing, say you,
 ' that a Christian in his chearfulness is directed unto
 ' (we humbly conceive) is explained Eph. 5. 4. *Nei-*
 ' *ther foolish talking nor jesting, which are not convenient,*
 ' *but rather giving of thanks.* Where Believers are di-
 ' rected how to improve their merry and chearful
 ' seasons, first negatively, not as the World common-
 ' ly doth in foolish talking and jesting, to stir up laugh-
 ' ter and vain mirth by ; Secondly, positively to re-
 ' create their Spirits, by getting up and holding forth
 ' their joy and comfort in praising and blessing the
 ' Name of the Lord, as he shall graciously enable
 ' them, whether with Metre, Tunes, or otherwise.

3 Reply. That a person should sing when in a joy-
 ful frame, by influence or help of the Spirit, we de-
 ny not, as a person afflicted is so to pray, and not by
 reading of a prayer ; yet singing of Psalms is one
 thing, and prayer another ; may not a Man spiritual-
 ly sing one of *Davids* Psalms, or other Scripture-
 Hymns, or Sacred Songs, because he did not com-
 pose it himself ? Do you suppose that every Man and
 woman in those Times had that special Gift to bring
 D 3 forth

forth a Psalm: for 'tis evident every Man and Woman some time or another may be merry or joyful in the Lord, and then they lie without exception, under the same obligation to sing Psalms. You it seems admit of Singing with a tuneable Voice; Nor indeed is there any other singing known to Mankind. Now if every Man has not the special Gift to bring forth a Psalm, both Matter, Manner and Tune, &c. by an immediate help of the Spirit, we find you suppose they cannot sing Psalms according to this Precept; nor must they sing any Psalms but of their own en-diting: Doubtless the weakest person that had no special Gift, *If merry in the Lord*, is bound and obliged to sing Psalms as well as any other, therefore singing was not tyed up to persons who had a special Gift so to sing: Besides, the Psalms are contained in the Holy Scripture which we are to sing, the matter being already composed by the Spirit; therefore praying and singing greatly differ, tho both are to be performed by the assistance of the Spirit. Brother, there is a Book of Psalms left for us in Gods Word to sing by, but no Book of Prayers is there left for us to pray by, therefore you say nothing: Nor is that doubtless true which you conceive from *Eph. 5. 4.* i. e. that the Apostle there gives directions about singing, but rather 'tis about speaking, *viz.* that we should not in our common discourse, &c. use foolish talking nor jesting, but that God should be always in our Minds, and we ready always to give thanks to him: For as Men are subject to sing foolish Songs when merry, which the Apostle *James* implicitly reproves and gives directions then to sing Psalms: so they are as ready to use jestings and foolish talkings, especially at Feasts, which are not convenient. Therefore *St. Paul* gives directions to avoid them, and to give thanks to God for all we have, and demean our selves with gravity, and an Holy and Heavenly Spirit.

5. Now we come to the fifth and last thing you insist upon, viz. you say you shall speak a little to the last particular you mentioned, which is this, viz.

But it may be said, is there no way to revive that Ordinance of Singing, or bringing forth a Psalm in the Church as it was in the primitive times, or as we have it recorded 1 Cor. 14. 26?

First, 'You say the Church hath that which is chiefly intended by it, in their solemn giving of Thanks, and praising of God together, as they have continual occasion and opportunity for it.

Reply. Why do you say the Church hath that which was chiefly intended, if the Church hath not the Ordinance or thing it self? is not this like what some say of Sprinkling, (viz.) Tho Baptism was performed by dipping, or applying the subject to the Water in the primitive times, and we use sprinkling, say they, yet we have that which was chiefly intended by it, for we use water, and apply it to the Subject; and sprinkling with the Blood of Christ is mentioned as well as washing in his Blood, and we use the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost when we do it, &c. What is it your Church hath? Why you praise God together, and so you ought, and may every hour, and yet have none of this Ordinance, because praising of God in prayer is not singing of his praises, tho praising of God be the chief thing intended, yet tis no other than a musical or melodious singing of his praises, which if you do not so, you have not the chief thing intended. Why should God enjoin his people to sing his praise, if to praise him in prayer without singing was sufficient? is not this to exalt your Wisdom above the Wisdom of God? or to make void a Gospel precept by your Tradition? read that in *Matthew*.

2. 'It may be confidently expected, say you, that if the Lords people did more earnestly pray, and wait for a more plentiful pouring forth of the Holy Spirit, there

‘ might be more assistance afforded for enditing and
 ‘ uttering a Psalm or Spiritual Song according to the
 ‘ primitive pattern.

1. *Reply.* If you have that which was chiefly intended by singing, what need is there to expect any more of the Spirit to be performed to endite a Psalm, or to pray for such pourings forth of the Spirit to that end? tho we all have cause to pray for more of the Holy Spirit to be poured forth, yet not to revive the practice of any Gospel Ordinance, which we see plainly the Churches were enjoined to perform; for if we want it to revive one Duty, we want it to revive all.

2. Prayer is an Ordinance, Preaching is an Ordinance, Baptism and the Lords Supper are Ordinances, and you are found in the discharge of all these Duties too, tho it may be in some things you may not so exactly be found in the performance of them according to the primitive Pattern, and may pray for the Spirit to be poured forth in a greater measure to help you to discharge your Duties in those Ordinances; but you will not however neglect them under such pretences, why then do you wholly neglect this of Singing the praises of God under such a pretence, *i. e.* for want of more of the Spirit to endite and utter a Psalm?

3. What ground have you to expect, or to pray for those extraordinary Gifts to perform any Gospel Ordinance which were in the primitive Times? if there is no promise for their return, then no ground of Faith to pray for them.

4. May not this tend to cause our people to cast off all other Ordinances upon the same pretences, and turn Seekers? 'tis very dangerous what you suggest here.

5. It appears you allow of enditing a Psalm, and that the Spirit may return to enable a person so to do. Brother, dare you say those Godly Men who endite Hymns and Spiritual Songs do not bring them
 forth

forth now by the help of the Holy Spirit? pray inform us, how we or any people may infallibly know that an Hymn is endited by the Spirit; may not, some as much question whether you or other Ministers endite or compile their Sermons by the assistance of Gods Spirit, by the same rule as you may question whether or no they have the assistance of the Spirit to endite Hymns.

6. There are some that can, and do sometimes now bring forth an Hymn extemporarily, may not you conclude the Spirit is returned already to enable them so to do? or what evidence further do you expect of such a thing hereafter, when more of the Spirit is poured forth? or how will you know, it is not a common nor a natural Gift which such a person hath? Brother, you seem to many wise men who have read your Epistle, to be in this matter a great *Enthusiast*.

7. Lastly, Can any Man endite an Hymn or Psalm without study and premeditation? Certainly what you hint here of enditing and uttering a Psalm or Spiritual Song when the Spirit is poured forth, &c. is just the same thing which we say many of the Lords Servants by the present help of the Spirit are enabled to do now.

3. 'It is clearly manifested, you say, in the Holy Scriptures, and sadly experienced, That the Church or Interest of Christ in the World was to be, and hath been not only a long time kept under by Persecution and Bondage by the power of Spiritual Babylon, &c. in which time the Harps have been as it were hung upon the willows, Psal. 137. 2. The Witnesses have prophesied in Sackcloth, and the Church in the Wilderness, whereby it hath been a season more for crying and mourning, than for rejoycing or singing: But also the Holy Spirit hath been in a great measure withdrawn, those eminent Gifts that were in the primitive Times have not been distributed to the Saints, the Church hath been fed and nourished,
"but

'but not feasted as in the beginning. And it is
 'markable, that in the *Revelations*, &c. we have
 'the or no mention made of a Song of praise uttered
 'in Heaven, that is, the Church; after the advance-
 'ment of the mystery of Iniquity, &c. till the *Lamb*
 'appeared again on Mount *Sion*, &c. Therefore
 'such a time, you say, it is no wonder if there be so few
 'Spiritual Songs endited and sung in the Churches, ac-
 'cording to the primitive pattern. It is now a time rather
 'to be joyning in united prayers for our mutual preser-
 'vation, than to be contending about bringing in again
 'this common formal singing into the Churches, p. 13.

Reply. What is all this mentioned for? what then
Israel of old under that dispensation, whose promises
 and priviledges were external, and more earthly than
 Spiritual, in the time of their Captivity, being carried
 away out of their own Land, refused to sing
 of the Songs of *Sion*, especially at the taunting re-
 quest of their insulting Enemies: Doth it follow from
 hence that the Saints in the Gospel days under Suffer-
 ing and Persecution must not sing? True, were our
 priviledges outward or earthly as theirs were, there
 might be the like reason for us to say as they did
 and hang our Harps on the willows. But Brother, you
 know better, our priviledges and promises are more
 sublime, Spiritual and Heavenly, the ground of our
 singing Gods praises are not for outward peace,
 earthly Riches and Prosperity, &c. but for Joy in
 Christ, or Redemption through his Blood, Union
 Communion with the Father and the Son, pardon of
 Justification, Adoption; free access to the Throne of
 the witnessings and sealings of the Holy Spirit, peace
 Conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost, with the hope
 of Eternal life, and as our sufferings do abound in us,
 consolation also aboundeth by Christ, 2 Cor. 1. 5. for these
 things we ought to sing the high praises of God; it is
 is matter of a Song, and from hence God deserves
 a glorious manner to have his praises celebrated: Can
 you think any outward mercies can better tune

Hearts and Tongues to sing Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, than these high, sublime and chiefest of blessings? Were a people more affected with outward or external mercies, or with deliverances from persecution under Antichrist, than with the mercies before mentioned, it would rather betray their sincerity than otherwise, and discover a carnal heart.

2. It is not known to all the World how sweetly and frequently the poor Saints and Martyrs sung Psalms, &c. just as they went into the Fire, like as Christ and his Disciples sung the night before he was betrayed, and Paul and Silas when in prison, and their feet fast in the stocks. What tho we have cause to mourn, yet we have cause always to rejoyce? nay, and we are exhorted to account it all joy when we fall into temptation: as the Apostles when they had been beaten, rejoyced they were accounted worthy to suffer shame for Christs Name sake.

3. Besides, why do you intimate as if the Church under persecution and reign of Antichrist, have not had such a measure of the Spirit and presence of God to feast them, as well as feed them; doubtless the Saints in the darkest time of Antichrist were most gloriously feasted: as any in any age of the Church, by which means they sung a new Song, even the Song of the Lamb who had redeemed them out of every kindred, tongue, people, and Nation, Rev. 5. 9. True, when Babylon is down it may add to their joy, and when they sing the Song of Moses as well as the Song of the Lamb, then the melody may seem more sweet: But we must tell you, God at all times deserves his praises, tho we were in the same condition with the Church of the Jews, and 'tis not unknown to you, the Book of the Lamentations was a mournful Song, and tho their case was deplorable, yet they sang, *It is the Lords mercies we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not*, Lam. 3. 22. *The Lord is my portion saith my Soul, &c. the Lord is good unto them that wait for him*, ver. 24, 25. Thus they sung then, and thus we may and ought to sing now. We grant, when

when *Babylon* is down, the Tongues of many have been dumb shall sing, i.e. many shall then be converted, and from thence shall sing; but we (before that time comes) have obtained that Grace and Blessing, have as much cause to sing now as they then: But since that will be a day of general Confession, or wherein multitudes shall be brought into Christ, it is noted as a special time of singing.

4. Do you think there wants now such a measure of the Spirit that is sufficient to put any one Gospel Ordinance into practice? The smallness of the Gifts, Measures of the Spirit cannot justify any person in the neglect of any Gospel Duty; you forget yourself, singing of Psalms is a Gospel Precept, and therefore we must that way praise God, or we neglect a duty.

5. What you speak of formal Singing, &c. affords us not, we plead for no such thing, but say our singing is Spiritual, as our preaching and praying is so, and is no invention, but a Sacred Institution of the Gospel.

6. What you speak concerning the Lords Presence after the Captivity in the rebuilding the Temple, having no *Urim* and *Thumim*, &c. makes against your cause. We would know whether there was any one Ordinance they neglected from such pretences, viz. they had no *Urim* and *Thumim*, nor Ark of the Covenant, or wanted some other visible demonstration of Gods presence, or special Gifts to perform it: the Lord opened your eyes to do as they did, who as they found it written in the Law of Moses, presently set about their work, without waiting for any visible or special demonstration of Gods Spirit, or presence with them, and were accepted with God.

‘He that forced himself in haste to offer a Sacrifice and would not wait, you say, was sharply reproved, 1 Sam. 13. 12. and sustained great damage, tho he seemed to make a fair plea for what he did, the Lord grant, say you, it may not be so, but those who out of pretended Zeal to restore an Ordinance, would bring in that which is not of Divine Institution, but humane Invention and Composition, &c. page 13.

1 Reply. How unreasonably and impertinently you bring the passage here in of *Sauls* offering a Sacrifice to atone for his sin of Disobedience, let all wise men judge; for as it belonged not to him, so his Conscience told him he should forbear the doing of it: But we know it belongs to us, and to all the Churches of Christ to sing Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs: and sure you cannot be so censorious to judge, we do that which belongs not to us? and also force our selves to do it against the light of our Conscience.

2. The second thing asserted by you is as bad and as Unchristian as the former, viz. That our Zeal to restore a lost Ordinance, is but pretended, in which you hint as if we were but a company of Hypocrites in what we do herein; God will judge between you and us, who alone is able, and whose place and right it is: you presume too far on Gods prerogative.

3. How dare you say singing of Psalms, &c. with Voices together (for that we suppose you mean) is not of Divine Institution, but of humane invention and composition? *David's* Psalms, and other Scripture Hymns and Spiritual Songs are not of humane composition, unless part of the Holy Bible is a piece of humane Invention; and for the singing of such Psalms, it is commanded, or positively required or enjoined on us, and on the Churches of the Saints, evident to all whose eyes are enlightened, from *Job. 5. 19. Col. 3. 16.* and that our Saviour with his Disciples, *Moses* and all *Israel*, *Paul* and *Silas* sung together, hath been proved beyond doubt.

4. Should one man force himself to sing alone in the Church, under pretence of a special Gift, you might see cause to charge him after that manner, i. e. forcing himself so to do, there being no Command neither Precept nor Example for such a practice, therefore such an act would be humane, and not of Divine Appointment.

5. *Saul* did not what God commanded, and therefore

reproved, nay more, than that :
 enough to fear upon the like acc^t
 our People do not sing Psalms,
 commanded to do, but strive to
 practice of it. Our Saviour saith, He
breaks the least of these Commandments, and teaches
so to do, shall be called the least in the Kingdom of
Heaven, Matth. 5. 19. Not that we have so little C
 ty as to charge you as guilty herein; but you w
 do well to consider that passage.

6. It grieves us to see such lines should drop
 your Pen as your Epistle is made up of, since we
 what wise men (who have no great love to you
 us,) speak not only of you, but of the *Baptists* in Re
 neral) upon the account thereof; and here is room to
 deed for them to say, we in restoring Baptism, &c.
 but force our selves without any power received fr
 on high : But when you can prove we may and o
 to restore one lost Ordinance without a special m
 sure of the Spirit, &c. and not another, we shall fo
 ther consider of what you have said: Some say, w
 have read your Epistle, that the *Baptists* are turn
Quakers, Enthusiasts, and what not?

We hope our Reverend Brethren, who are not
 convinced of Singing, but dare not censure others,
 see cause to prevent the coming out of any more
 kind of stuff for the time to come, and find out
 other way to put an end to this unpleasant Con
 versie, which all know was begun by Mr. Mar
 tho the more which is said against singing of Psalms
 &c. we are sure it will tend for the further clea
 it up to be the duty of the Churches.

‘ You to close your Epistle, would have your pe
 ‘ to consider what a presence of God was with the
 ‘ tized Churches formerly, with continual addition
 ‘ them, &c. however it hath been unduly represe
 ‘ by a Zealot for common singing to the contrary,

Reply. That our Churches were blessed in those times
 we deny not, and yet this is weakly added by

ce they walked up according to th
 en received; but we have little r
 should be prosperous, or alike b
 d hath convinced us of this a
 ould we willfully neglect them? w
 u mean, we know not.

Is not Prayer, you say, a moral duty as much as singing
 be, why then do they not call upon all to lift up their Voices
 ether in prayer, &c. there be many bundreds that can speak
 libly, that cannot sing at all, or not tunably, certainly all
 ural or moral duty and worship must be managed accord-
 to the directions of the great God, as he hath revealed
 e us by our Lord Jesus, and his Apostles in the New Te-
 ment: to which you mention 1 Cor. 14. 26.

Reply. We deny not (you know well enough) pray-
 to be a moral Duty, as well as singing the praises of
 d is such; but all men know for a whole Congre-
 tion to lift up their voices together in prayer would
 confusion, but so it is not for a whole Congregati-
 to lift up their voices together in singing; and were
 so, you must charge the Church of God under the
 w, and Christ and his Disciples, Paul and Silas, &c.
 with confusion under the Gospel (as we said before)
 whose practice we say is our pattern in the managing
 of that Duty: as touching that Scripture 1 Cor. 14. 26.
 we have answered your cloudy mistakes about that
 text, tho the Prophets or Teachers are to speak one
 one to prevent confusion, yet that is no direction
 on singing Psalms: Nor is there one president, that in
 d ordinary and publick worship, any one person
 shall sing alone, tho' there are divers for social sing-
 ing, or singing with united voices.

2. If that Text refers to ordinary Gifts as well as
 extraordinary, as you grant it doth, then why do you
 set upon the practice of your way of singing in the
 church? pag. 14. We deny that any Christian Man or
 woman is without a tunable Voice, tho not all to
 that degree as some have, through want of exercise.
 thou speak as if you was for Peace and Union in the
 Church

Churches, tho in this matter at present we are not
a mind; would to God we had good proof of it:
why must not singing be admitted, you give no
son for it, but becaule you say 'tis an Invention, an
novation, &c.

*But what must be done to them who resolvedly persist in su
course, our Lord declares, you say, and commands us to mark them
and to have no fellowship with them, or to avoid them, Rom. 15.*

Repy. Is this your love to your Brethren who are for Sing
and resolve to persist in promoting of it? No Liberty of Con
ente will you allow to such, it appears, to walk according
their light; this shews how you are for Love and Union: be
case! 'Tis well Reverend *Kneelys* is dead: Blessed be God, the
Churches who are for singing have more Charity for their dis
ing Members; they are willing to have communion with them
tho they resolvedly oppose at present the singing the praise
God, and refuse communion with the Churches for no other
son: and 'tis to be feared you have been an ill Instrument in
matter, as what you say here sufficiently evinces. In most Churches
in *London* there are some who sing in God's Worship, and
zealous for it, what must they do with them? The truth is,
such Members are to be mark'd, &c. who cause divisions in
Church, you have here taught such Churches: All men may
what their Duty is towards them who separate themselves
this account, the Lord in mercy open your eyes as well as th
that so all Bitterness, Pride, Ignorance and Prejudice may be av
ed, and Love, Peace, Charity and Concord, maintained in
the Churches of the Saints.

To conclude, we desire such Members to consider, who
rate themselves from any Church or Churches upon the acc
before mentioned, that they do as much as in them lies ex
municate such Churches; also we would know whether in
Judgments singing of Psalms is a capital Error, and that
sus Christ hath withdrawn himself from such a Church
not, let them consider, what ground they have to
draw themselves, and violate their solemn Covenant with su
Church.

FINIS.

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*Such who desire to have the whole that hath been said of late
Dr. Wright, Mr. Keach, Mr. Knowls, Mr. Whinnel, for
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